

THE TIMES



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EXCLUSIVE THIS WEEK

RUNCIE, ROYALTY AND RELIGION

'I have done my best to die before this book is published'
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NIGELLA LAWSON

Who has the right to smack in the step-family?
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BEST OF ENGLAND v BEST OF EUROPE

MANCHESTER UNITED v JUVENTUS

Rob Hughes previews the big match, PAGE 44
PLUS: George Graham takes over at Leeds, PAGE 48



Ministers risk new battle with EU

Britain is set to abandon mad cow cull

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND NIGEL HAWKES

Legal aid plans abandoned

THE planned slaughter of 125,000 cattle is likely to be shelved by ministers tomorrow, and the cull — designed to persuade Europe to lift the ban on British beef exports — may never be carried out.

The move, which could inflame the dispute between Britain and her European partners, comes in the light of new research suggesting that "mad cow" disease will die out naturally in five years and reflects ministers' pessimism that the EU will agree to raise the ban this autumn. Conservative business managers also doubt that the order authorising the cull would get through the House of Commons.

No new cases of the CJD variant which sparked the beef crisis have been reported in the past three months and Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, is now expected to suggest to the ministerial committee on the BSE crisis that the whole culling scheme be reviewed.

A decision to shelf or reduce the culling programme would inflame tensions with the European Commission and individual member states, and put a big hole in the Florence summit agreement which ended the British policy of non-cooperation with the EU. But it would delight the farming community and Conservative MPs from rural areas who have become increasingly vociferous in their opposition to the slaughter.

Mr Hogg will meet Franz Fischler, the European Farm Commissioner, on Monday to

discuss the prospects for lifting the ban, but the indications have not been favourable. The minister is understood to believe that with there is little likelihood of the ban being lifted soon, there is no point in pressing ahead with a cull that had never been justified on scientific grounds.

Ministers agree, however, that some 22,000 cattle should be slaughtered as a result of the discovery in August that BSE can be passed from mother to calf. Mr Hogg immediately accepted that the slaughter scheme should be widened to include a limited number of the "last born" calves from infected cows.

An Oxford University study showing that BSE was in rapid decline, that it was likely to peter out by 2001 and that slaughtering thousands more cows would not hasten the process has meanwhile added

fuel to the internal Tory debate.

Under present plans, MPs would consider the order authorising the selective cull next month, and it would be put into effect almost immediately. But during the summer recess more and more Tory MPs suggested that they would not back the programme, and unless Labour supported the order — which appears unlikely — the Government would not get it through.

Ministers fear that even if the Commons did agree the cull, the European Commission might demand even more. While they accept that it would be difficult to retreat from the Florence deal, they believe they can argue that the situation has changed. An informed source said last night: "The world of science has moved on since Florence. We have followed science so far and we must take account of the new evidence."

The British Association for the Advancement of Science was meanwhile being told that no cases of the new form of Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease had been confirmed since the end of May, leaving the total at 12.

Professor John Pattison of University College London said: "That means the news could have been very much worse. But good news will be a lot of time to be sure of."

In March, when the new strain was first identified and tentatively linked to infected beef, Professor Pattison suggested that there could eventually be 500,000 cases.



Ross and Carolyn Jenkins, who say they will sue the Great Ormond Street children's hospital after a doctor there was criticised by a coroner for "unwise and erroneous" actions which led to the death of their daughter Debbie, six

Saddam fires missiles at US planes

IRAQ said last night that its air defence units had fired three missiles at American aircraft policing the no-fly zone in southern Iraq, forcing the "hostile targets" to flee.

An Iraqi military spokesman, quoted by the official Iraqi News Agency, said: "The American enemy planes violated Iraq's air space using bases in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, flying 88 sorties."

Last week Saddam Hussein said he would ignore air exclusion zones declared by America, Britain and France over northern and southern Iraq in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War. (Reuters)

America's warning, page 14
Simon Jenkins, page 18
Letters, page 19

Blair kicking us in teeth, say furious union leaders

By JILL SHERMAN AND PHILIP BASSETT

TONY BLAIR tried last night to defuse the worsening dispute over Labour's plans to curb strike action as trade union leaders accused him of "kicking them in the teeth".

The Labour leader arrived in Blackpool yesterday to face fierce protests from trade unionists over his proposals to force unions to ballot their members again if employers put forward a better offer during a dispute. He was also snubbed by post office union leaders who called two more Royal Mail strikes for this month after pointedly refusing to ballot their members.

John Monks, TUC General Secretary, who is regarded as one of Mr Blair's allies also fuelled the row by accusing Labour of issuing "confusing statements on the serious issues of avoiding and resolving

industrial disputes which take us backwards not forwards".

After a meeting yesterday afternoon, the Communications

Workers' Union said that it would hold 24-hour strikes on September 20 and 21. They come after eight previous strikes over pay and working practices. Last night, David Blunkett, Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, intensified trade union anger by announcing a four-point plan to try to prevent damaging public sector disputes. The measures include extending the present pay review bodies to cover other public sector workers and calling on employers and trade unions to enter binding agreements to resolve disputes.

But the plan was thrown into confusion when the Labour leadership appeared to backtrack on one of the main

Continued on page 2, col 4

Single currency, page 2

Catherine Cookson does it her way at 90

By ROBIN YOUNG

AGED 90, Dame Catherine Cookson, whose books have sold more than 100 million copies, is launching a new career as a singer with the release in November of a tape featuring her renditions of old-time favourites and songs she has written herself. Called *Her Way*, the tape has been mixed and cleared of extraneous background noise at the Abbey Road studios immortalised by the Beatles.

Dame Catherine, who is bedridden with a rare blood disorder, recorded some

of the songs ten years ago, when she was 80. She said: "I experimented for my own pleasure and discovered that, if I put my heart into it, I could sing."

The tapes were stored in the attic when she became ill, but were recently rediscovered by her husband, Tom. "He played them and we were impressed as this woman began to sing," she said. "I could not believe it was me."

The tape was played to Ray Marshall, who produces all the Cookson films on television, and he arranged for Colin Towns, who writes scores for television, to

provide backing music. Mr Marshall, who is currently shooting another Cookson drama, *The Rag Nymph*, said that a sneak preview of the finished tapes was held at Dame Catherine's ninetieth birthday party, adding: "It was quite something, and had a lot of people in tears — it was very moving."

Dame Catherine intersperses her songs with explanations of what they mean to her. In one example, she says: "My grandfather always sang *Danny Boy* to me when he'd had a drink and was three sheets to the wind."



Dame Catherine on song

Fears of surge in winter meningitis

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A SURGE in meningitis cases this winter was predicted by public health specialists yesterday after official figures revealed that last winter's total was the highest for more than 20 years.

The figures, published by the Office for National Statistics, show that the number of meningococcal meningitis cases between October and March was 835, the highest since the early 1970s.

England and Wales were worst affected, and so far there has been no similar rise in Scotland. Sir Kenneth Calman, the Government's chief medical officer, told the Commons health select committee earlier this year that meningitis was the disease he feared most this winter.

However, the health department played down the rise. A spokeswoman said: "We dispute the way the figures have been presented. There has been an increase, but not of that order."

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Plans to overhaul legal aid system are shelved

FRANCIS GIBB
LONDON CORRESPONDENT

To stop legal aid funds being wasted on undeserving cases the Government has effectively shelved the White Paper, a central part of the speech in July. The legal aid scheme published by the Chancellor in July is now expected to be in the Queen's Speech this autumn.

The measures would have seen people paying far more towards

their legal aid bills. In some civil disputes they would have had to make contributions well beyond the end of a case, putting their homes at risk.

The White Paper reforms also included a new, stiffer "deservingness" test aimed at stopping legal aid funds being used on what the Government sees as "too many weak, trivial and undeserving cases". A third measure was to enable people who win a case against a legally-aided opponent to recoup their costs.

However, despite early hopes

that the legal aid changes could be part of a likely Bill on civil justice reforms, it now looks certain that they will not be part of the government's legislative programme in the run-up to a general election.

Instead, the Lord Chancellor's Department is likely to press ahead with those parts of the White Paper which can be implemented without legislation. These are mainly wide-ranging reforms to create a National Health Service-style internal market in legal services, with legal aid delivered under block contracts.

Gary Streeter, MP, Junior Minister at the Lord Chancellor's Department, indicated that other parts of the reforms would also be delayed. He told the Justices' Clerks' Society in Warwick that, under the reforms, the Legal Aid Board would be taking over the job of granting criminal legal aid from magistrates' courts.

Instead, all legal aid would be handled by the Legal Aid Board which would award block contracts to law firms and advice agencies.

Mr Streeter said yesterday, however, that the change could, realistically, take several years. "Legislation is needed to enable contracting of full legal aid services to advice agencies," he said.

The disclosure that a Legal Aid Bill is effectively shelved comes as the legal profession is preparing a full-scale campaign of opposition to the measures. Today, the Law Society, the solicitors' professional body, and nine advice and civil liberty organisations, will issue a joint statement opposing the proposals.

Russell Wallman, of the Law Society, said he would welcome a

gradual approach to the plans, enabling them to be tested in pilot projects and research, rather than swift legislation. He said: "There is, in fact, no need now for legislation to ration legal aid by cash limits because, far from being out of control, the budget has in recent years been underspent."

Nor, he added, was there a need for legislation to create a new "deservingness" test. The granting of legal aid was already controlled by existing rules, although these could be tightened.

Guy Mansfield, QC, vice-chair-

man of the Bar Council legal aid committee, said it was a pity the Government was not proceeding with a long-overdue reform on the legal aid merits test which, he said, would meet public concern that legal aid goes to deserving cases. "Instead, they will now proceed with other measures which are tinkering at the edges — such as proposals for standard fees for advocates which are simplistic and crude, and amount to a Bar-bashing exercise which will ensure that people on legal aid do not get a competent service."

Labour may hit the wealthy to avoid having to raise top rate for earnings

Blair may adopt US tactic to close tax loopholes

BY PETER RIDDELL

THE Labour leadership is considering ways of reducing tax loopholes enjoyed by the wealthy as an alternative to raising the top marginal rate of income tax of 40 per cent.

Among the options being examined is a requirement for very wealthy people to pay a set minimum amount of income in tax and limit the total benefits they receive from various tax allowances and loopholes.

The system is a key weapon in America that ensures the very rich pay a significant proportion of their income in tax, however skilful — or

New Labour is launching a fresh drive to encourage young people to join the party by cutting its membership fee to just £1 for those aged 15 to 21. The usual annual fee is £15. In another move, members who pay their subscription for the next three years will get an extra year free.

devious — their accountants. A second option is to cap the amount people can receive in allowances. Tony Blair accepts that he will have to make clear well before the general election whether a Labour

Where red tape beats dodgers

BY SARA MCCONNELL

WOULD-BE tax dodgers in the US have a hard time of it. The tax system is specifically designed to extract a payment from every individual and company in the country, however clever their accountants and however nifty their manipulation of the system.

The secret weapon of the Internal Revenue Service is the Alternative Minimum Tax, introduced in 1986 in an effort to stop wealthy individuals and companies from taking advantage of tax shelters.

The AMT runs alongside the mainstream tax system and is effectively a second regime in its own right with its own allowances and tax credits. Taxpayers under this regime are allowed less generous tax breaks and have less leeway to put off paying

tax until future years. Under the AMT system, individuals pay a flat rate of 26 per cent (28 per cent for taxable income of \$175,000 (£116,000) or more) while companies pay a flat rate of 20 per cent.

But, according to Charles Merriman, partner in charge of Ernst & Young's US and international tax desk, the AMT is "outrageously complex and an administrative burden". Some US companies have been forced to make expensive adjustments to their computer systems to take account of two different, parallel tax regimes. On top of this, the system has not led to more tax flowing into US federal coffers.

It is up to taxpayers themselves to assess whether they have to file tax returns under AMT or under the mainstream regime as part of the US self-assessment system.

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Post union chiefs call more strikes

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

LEADERS of the main postal union last night announced two further Royal Mail strikes but the rail union called off three of the regional strikes due to hit train services today.

The move by the Communication Workers' Union will lead to the Government suspending, probably today, the Post Office's statutory letter monopoly for a further three months, and could well see Labour Party leaders withdraw their tentative support for the postal strikes.

The two additional 24-hour strikes come after the eight the union has already staged over pay and working practices and which led to the PO's letter monopoly being suspended.

The strikes are to begin at 7pm on Friday, September 20, and at 10pm on Sunday, September 22, will severely hit mail services over the whole weekend in what the CWU said last night was a "precursor to a further range of strike action aimed at bringing the dispute to a satisfactory conclusion".

Alan Johnson, CWU's joint general secretary, said: "We have talked to the employer for over two years. We have spent over 100 hours at the



Tony Blair during a visit to the Andrew oil field in the North Sea yesterday

Blair 'kicking us in teeth'

Continued from page 1

proposals. Mr Blunkett and Mr Blair seemed to play down the idea of immediate legislation to force unions to hold new ballots of their members. Party sources said later that negotiations over all the proposals would start with Acas next Thursday, but if legislation was needed, it would be introduced.

They also made clear that individual members needed to be consulted about new offers and that while other options could be considered, it was likely that that could be done only through legally enforceable second ballots.

Law Adams, general secretary of the train drivers' union, Aslef, led a hostile reception to Mr Blair. He said he could not accept the proposals

"An incoming Labour government is not going to tolerate the activities of armchair revolutionaries whose only interest is disruption and who use disputes as an opportunity for mischief-making."

Mr Blair made clear on his arrival that he would disregard the troublemakers within the trade union movement, but he was sure that "sensible" union leaders would support his plans. He denied that he was "bashing" anyone or trying to play politics with anyone. "We are looking at new ways to resolve disputes in a new labour market where there is intense competition round the world," he said, adding: "You are not going to solve the problems of the 21st century with the debates of the 70s and 80s."

TUC backs single currency

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
AND JILL SHERMAN

UNIONS are to campaign for Britain to join a single currency at the earliest opportunity despite a warning that rushing in could bring a Labour government down.

The Trades Union Congress endorsed Britain's early entry into monetary union even though Unison abstained and several others including the RMT opposed the idea. John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, called for support because there were "more advantages in joining than in staying out".

Opponents fear that trying to meet the strict economic convergence criteria of the Maastricht treaty will mean big cuts in public expenditure and the loss of many jobs.

At a fringe meeting, Ken Livingstone, MP for Brent East, warned Tony Blair that if he took Britain into a single currency from the start his government would be faced with permanent recession. "Within 18 months we would be as unpopular as John Major and the Tories. We would be devastated in local government and the next election. Any talk about the need to get a second term would be washed away."

Cable firms force BT to cut prices

British Telecom, losing more than 50,000 customers a month to cable competitors, is cutting its prices. From October 8, the cost of evening and night-time national calls will come down 20 per cent, from 5.8p to 4.65p a minute, while daytime national calls will fall from 8.8p to 8.6p a minute. BT cut international weekend charges earlier this week by between 5 and 25 per cent and yesterday reduced weekday calls between 10 and 25 per cent. A five-minute call to the US next month will be 9.2p a minute, down 31 per cent from early September.

Consumer reaction, page 25

Royal family talks

Senior members of the Royal family and their advisers are to meet at Balmoral this month for a review of the monarchy, for the first time since the Prince of Wales's divorce. They are likely to discuss how to rebuild the Prince's image, the monarch as head of the Church of England, and the 1701 Act of Settlement which debars heirs to the throne from marrying Roman Catholics.

Dunblane memorial

The Prince of Wales has accepted an invitation from relatives of the victims of the Dunblane shooting to attend a memorial service for the 16 children and their teacher who died. Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, and George Robertson, the Shadow Scottish Secretary, who lives in Dunblane, are also expected to attend the service at Dunblane cathedral on October 9.

School boycott halted

Parents yesterday called off their boycott of a Nottinghamshire school where an allegedly unruly ten-year-old is receiving personal tuition to avoid a strike by teachers. Fifty pupils at Manton Junior School, Worksop, were kept at home for a second day yesterday but parents said they would send them back today as "a show of good faith".

Designer is cleared

The designer of an award-winning building has succeeded in overturning proceedings in which she was convicted of being unqualified as an architect and fined £2,000. Gabriele Bramante, who won four awards for her Citizens' Advice Bureau building in Chessington, Surrey, said she had not been told of the proceedings until they were over.

Abusers to be shielded

People who allegedly abused youngsters from children's homes in Wales are to be granted anonymity. Sir Ronald Waterhouse, chairman of an inquiry ordered by the Welsh Secretary, said at a preliminary hearing in Ewloe, Flintshire, that individuals against whom allegations are made would be referred to by numbers or letters.

Elderly most in fear

Elderly women are more afraid of attack than any other group but are at the least risk, a national police campaign launched yesterday claims. A police fact sheet aimed at reducing anxiety reports that 1 in 3 elderly women feel very unsafe, but fewer than 1 in 4,000 will be assaulted. Young men feel the most secure but face a 1 in 38 chance of attack.

First woman top gun

Helen Gardiner, 27, became the RAF's first woman fighter pilot to carry out a live intercept with "unfriendly" aircraft yesterday when she went into action in her Tornado F3 fighter. She was scrambled from RAF Leuchars, Fife, after two Russian maritime patrol aircraft were spotted flying into British airspace to spy on a Nato exercise.

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Consultant is accused of failing to provide adequate supervision of his junior staff

Report into deaths at hospital finds catalogue of errors

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN INVESTIGATION into a unit at Grimsby Hospital where three people died and two babies were stillborn has found a catalogue of errors, misjudgments and ineptitude.

A report published yesterday says that delicate surgery was carried out by unsupervised inexperienced staff, patients had been misdiagnosed and complaints wrongly handled.

Michael Muldoon, consultant in charge of the obstetrics and gynaecology department, escaped overall condemnation, but was accused of poor communication, a lack of lead-



Mishka Parnell, born with scars, and Michael Muldoon, who did the amniocentesis test on her

ership in specific cases and failing to supervise juniors.

The Northern and Yorkshire region of the NHS executive has sent copies of the report to the General Medical Council for it to consider taking further action.

Mr Muldoon, 60, retired last Jan-

uary while the inquiry team of

two outside specialists was

gathering its evidence.

Michael Hallberg, a former policeman from Louth, Lincolnshire, whose wife Kay died in 1993, six weeks after

going into Grimsby Hospital for an apparently routine

scrape of the womb, said:

"This report is a whitewash, it

is a collection of correspond-

ing opposites. On one hand

they say Muldoon and

his staff did wrong, on the

other they say they acted well."

His wife's bowel and uterus

were punctured during the

operation carried out by Mr

Muldoon's registrar, and a

second operation was carried

the next day in an attempt to

repair the damage. Some of

the wounds were not found,

necessitating further opera-

tions. Mrs Hallberg, 40, con-

tracted peritonitis, suffered

heart and liver damage and

required a tracheotomy to

relieve lung problems. She

also went blind before she

died.

"I want to know who killed

my wife," Mr Hallberg, 44,

said. "I am absolutely disgust-

ed by this report, it answers

nothing. I am talking to my

solicitor about suing the hos-

ital. They are moral cowards,

no one has yet told me why my

wife died."

The inquiry report con-

cludes that: "The tragedy

might have been avoided by

better assessment of the com-

petence and better supervision

of the junior doctor before she

was allowed to operate on her

own and earlier involvement

of a general surgeon to deal

with the complication of the



Terry and Diane Parnell with son Jack. The parents blame the hospital for their daughter Mishka's death

gynaecological procedure." Mr Hallberg said the junior in question, a Dr Padma, re-turned to India shortly before his wife's inquest. All inquiries have failed to trace her.

Jane Davies, whose sister

Carol Richardson died from

massive bleeding after Mr

Muldoon accidentally severed

an artery during a hysterectomy

in August 1990, said: "This

report is a load of rubbish. He

did not have sufficient exper-

ience or training to do my

sister's operation. If he had,

my sister would be here today."

The inquiry concludes that

"Mr Muldoon should have

received further training in

the surgical technique before

undertaking it on his own."

An inquest recorded a verdict

of misadventure and the hos-

pit authorities have paid Ms

Richardson's family £3,500 in

an out-of-court settlement.

Terry and Diane Parnell

claimed that their daughter

Mishka was brain-damaged in

the womb in 1990 during a

"blind" amniocentesis test, in

which a syringe is inserted to

extract fluid to test for Down's

syndrome. Three attempts

had to be made before a

satisfactory sample was ob-

tained. The child was born

with scars on her tongue and

the back of her head. She died

before her third birthday

because of her condition. The

report acknowledges that the

procedure used was accept-

able some years ago, but today

was done with the benefit of

ultrasound scanning to indi-

cate how the baby was lying. It

says: "The assessors ex-

pressed concerns about Mr

Muldoon's knowledge of am-

niocentesis."

Mr Parnell said last night

that he had obtained an inde-

pendent medical report on his

daughter's death which he

hoped would form the basis of

a claim against the hospital

authorities.

In a fourth case, Mr

Muldoon rejected a GP's opin-

ion that an expectant mother

was diabetic. The woman

subsequently suffered two

stillbirths attributed to the

condition. The report says:

"Many essential investiga-

tions were not carried out."

The inquiry team examined

18 cases over 20 years and

found cause for concern in

two-thirds of them. However,

it concludes that they were

"uncommon events". It con-

sidered that overall "the level

of care provided by Mr

Muldoon was of a satisfactory

standard". It makes 51 de-

tailed recommendations

which Grimsby Hospital has

accepted. An advice line has

been set up for concerned

patients on 01472 875500.

Father of Julie Ward halts film

By CAROL MIDGLEY

THE father of Julie Ward, the British woman found murdered in a Kenyan game reserve, has halted a BBC film about the hunt for her killers, complaining it was being turned into a Hollywood-style blockbuster.

John Ward, 62, who has waged an eight-year campaign for justice, had agreed to sell the rights to his book to the BBC, which wanted to make a drama-documentary about the story. But he said the corporation later decided to change the project to a full-length feature film and introduced changes to the script.

Mr Ward said the produc-

ers did not like the "dull periods" during his investigation and created new action sequences. They wanted to include a fictitious attempt on his life by masked men at Nairobi airport and to show Mr Ward's thriving hotel business going bankrupt because of the amount of time he was spending on the case.

He was also to experience severe difficulties with his wife, Janet, as their marriage suffered under the strain.

One of the final straws was that Patrick Stewart, who starred in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, was being touted to play Mr Ward. Anton Rodgers, the British character actor, was also named as an alternative to Stewart.

"I saw the script and it was unacceptable," said Mr Ward, who had a clause in his contract with the BBC that allowed him to cancel the project if it was not completed within a certain time. "It was supposed to be for television but the BBC got increasingly excited about the project until it was going to be released in cinemas worldwide, then shown on planes, then released on video and shown on TV last of all. Its timescale got longer and longer and that meant that, fortunately, I was able to exercise my option and pull the plug."

Miss Ward, 28, was found

murdered in 1988. Her

charred remains were discov-

ered in the remote Masai Mara game reserve. Initially the Kenyans insisted she had been eaten by wild animals, but were later forced to admit she had been murdered.

Parents plan to sue Great Ormond Street over heart girl's death

By TIM JONES

A SENIOR doctor at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children was criticised by a coroner yesterday for "unwise and erroneous" actions which led to the death of a six-year-old girl. After the inquest, the parents of Deborah Jenkins said they intended to sue the London hospital.

Ross and Carolyn Jenkins say that Deborah died because the doctor disregarded their wishes and did not obtain their consent for the procedures that were carried out. Stephen Chan, the St Pancras Coroner, recorded a verdict of misadventure. "It is not difficult to understand the

parents' sense of outrage and indeed their feeling of betrayal," he said.

Mr and Mrs Jenkins had consented to Deborah being given a diagnostic catheter examination, a routine procedure that involved inserting a probe through the groin and into the heart. But the inquest was told that they had not given permission for a curative procedure that involved inserting a balloon via the catheter to the heart and inflating it to expand the narrowed coronary artery.

Deborah died in July last year when the balloon burst and efforts to retrieve it with another catheter led to a blocked blood flow, causing brain damage. Mr Chan said: "No doubt

the doctor's regret at the tragic consequences is of little comfort to the parents. His decision may have been unwise and erroneous, certainly for Deborah, as it contributed to her premature demise."

The coroner said that there was no evidence of gross negligence by Dr James Taylor, the consultant paediatric cardiologist. "I am satisfied he was acting conscientiously and carefully and was sincere in his belief that he was acting in the best interests of his patient."

The inquest was told that Deborah, from Sproxton, near Norwich, had been born with serious heart defects and had undergone two open-heart

operations. It was only when she was

on the operating table the day before

she died that Dr Taylor and his team

discovered that a conduit which had

been inserted into her artery had

been narrowed because of the pres-

sure of the muscle.

Dr Taylor said in evidence that he

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٥٥٣ من الأصل

Efforts to return stolen gold thwarted by greed, confusion and legal wrangles

Nazi thieves left a wound that will not heal



By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

GOLD has proved to be the most intractable legacy of the Second World War. More than 50 years after Hitler's defeat, governments, refugees and Holocaust victims' families are still waiting for their share of the \$84 million held in British and American banks.

Efforts to trace the missing ingots and return them to their rightful owners have been frustrated by greed, confusion and legal wrangles. But the main problem has been the nature of the metal itself: the jewellery, coins, heirlooms and Jewish sacred objects plundered all over Europe from families imprisoned or exterminated were all sent to a central smelter, melted down and turned into ingots whose provenance can never now be established.

Yesterday the Foreign Office responded to the growing concern over the gold and suspicion that intelligence documents had been held back by releasing a summary of the Government's role in tracing the Nazi gold and the attempt to compensate the victims of Nazi looting.

A 23-page pamphlet, compiled on orders of Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, from government archives, makes public the long negotiations, diplomatic arguments and terse exchanges between the Allies. These have now all been made public; most were published 40 years ago.

As the pamphlet makes



Gold bullion in the Bank of England at the end of the war, when ingots were being shipped from Germany

neutral status. They agreed, after being urged on moral grounds, to begin talks. The Americans said they held \$200 million worth of Nazi gold. At first they denied all knowledge, but when talks became heated Mr A. Hirsch, their chief negotiator, let slip that Swiss banks had \$500 million worth.

Finally in May 1946, they agreed to a one-off payment of 250 million Swiss francs to the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. The Allies, angry but impotent, decided this was the best deal on offer and waived all further claims against the Swiss. The Swiss later made a further ex-gratia payment of 121.5 million Swiss francs. But they kept, in the end, about seven eighths of all the German gold deposited.

The Treasury was reluctant, but Mr Cobbold of the Bank of England told the Swiss embassy in London that he could rely on his country having "the maximum amount of trouble" after the war.

The problem, as the Allies later discovered, was that this was a bluff. The Swiss, realising the way the war was going, belatedly said that they would not accept any gold from anyone in German-occupied territory, and in December 1944 blocked all Hungarian, Slovak and Croatian accounts in Switzerland. But the end of hostilities revealed the allied weakness: they had no legal way to compel the Swiss to hand over the gold.

With all the other neutral states, the Swiss claimed that such a demand violated their

Leading article, page 19

DAILY MAIL



US officials inspecting 100 tons of Nazi gold captured in 1945. Much of it came from jewellery, coins and Jewish sacred objects plundered all over Europe

Experts to scrutinise secret dealings

FROM PETER CAPELLA
IN GENEVA

SWITZERLAND was urged yesterday to publish a full record of its wartime financial dealings with the Nazi regime, after Britain said the Swiss may have turned over only part of the gold they acknowledged buying from the Germans.

Officials said the British and Swiss Foreign Ministers were likely to discuss the matter in Switzerland next week. Legislation is being prepared in Geneva to allow a commission of experts to take an unhindered look at Swiss financial dealings with the Nazis regardless of banking secrecy laws.

The Swiss Foreign Ministry said the inquiry, which would have to be approved by parliament, would examine all the dealings of private and public financial institutions with Germany after 1933.

The Foreign Office did not confirm claims by Jewish groups that a secret deal was struck between the neutral Swiss and America, Britain, France and Russia. However, it said there was speculation over the amounts involved. There was some confusion over the exact figures because of fluctuations in exchange rates, gold prices and inflation over 50 years.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has begun an internal inquiry into allegations that several of its delegates collaborated with the Nazis. The World Jewish Congress and the American Senate Banking Committee have given the organisation the names of about 30 suspected collaborators drawn from American archives.

The ICRC said that ten been identified as working for the International Red Cross and six others worked for national Red Cross societies in occupied Europe.

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مكتبة من الأصل

British Association: scientists' research casts fresh light on mysteries ancient and modern

Musical relics cast ancient man as father of the blues

REPORTS BY NIGEL HAWKES AND NICK NUTTALL

EARLY man could play the blues, a study of ancient instruments has suggested.

The musical ancestors of Charlie Parker played flutes made from the bones of large birds, such as vultures. The flutes were simple instruments, examples of which have been found in caves dating from up to 24,000 years ago.

In some relics the positioning of the drilled holes and the worn patches of bone caused by fingering techniques are evidence that the players could "bend" notes as skilfully as a modern jazz performer, giving their music colour and emotion.

Flutes of this type were still being used in Roman and Anglo-Saxon times and large numbers of them, often made from the shin-bones of sheep, have been found in archaeological sites. Replicas moulded from plastic reveal a range of tunings, the British Association meeting in Birmingham was told yesterday.

Graeme Lawson, of the Music-Archaeological Survey in Cambridge, said that some of the bone instruments showed signs of having been extensively used and cher-

ished. There was evidence of the use of musical intervals roughly corresponding to today's tones and semitones. But the instruments were different in having nuances of pitch to provide colour to the scales.

Did the originators deliberately create such "blue" tunings, he asked, or were they simply evidence of clumsy construction?

The signs were that they were deliberate. The distances between the finger holes on different instruments were rarely uniform and in some cases scratched markers suggested careful laying-out, based on calculation or the application of some rule of thumb. The undercutting of the finger-holes after drilling showed evidence of still finer adjustment.

"Clearly, simple though these instruments seem, they are embodiments of very special musical requirements and complex cultural systems," he said.

The research programme now aims to study the oldest instruments, comparing them with the more recent Roman and Anglo-Saxon pipes. From traces of the surface taken by scanning electron microscopes, the researchers hope to

learn more about the fingering techniques used by pipers 24,000 years ago.

The familiar tuning of modern instruments was developed to bring order to what was seen as musical chaos. But instruments from the Stone Age up to Roman and medieval times revealed a freer musical taste. The early musicians would have made their own instruments, tuning them by drilling holes in the correct places and making them bigger or smaller.

Dr Lawson, who demonstrated how to play a flute made from sheep bone, said: "It looks like it was a preference. Certainly in the Anglo-Saxon and Roman period when we looked at the instruments closely not only have the finger holes been drilled with the point of a knife, but they have been drilled in accordance with markers put on the surface of the bone beforehand. Some of the holes are undercut. They have clearly been trying to adjust them to hit a pattern they had in mind."

Close examination of the hole rims showed areas that were polished, suggesting sliding with the fingertips.



Graeme Lawson with prehistoric and medieval flutes made from animal bone

Aliens, night flights and things that go bump are all in the mind



Blackmore: said sleep paralysis was to blame

MORE THAN a million Britons believe that they have been abducted by aliens and taken on rides across space and time, and more than half the population has woken from sleep to sense a strange presence in the room, a British psychologist claimed yesterday.

Dr Sue Blackmore said these and scores of so-called paranormal experiences — including out-of-body sensations and the sighting of ghosts — can be explained as unusual electrical activity in key parts of the brain.

"My research shows that these are really common experiences. Those doctors who say that they are symptoms that someone is ill are wrong: they are actually ordinary experiences. People who have them

need reassurance, not drugs," said Dr Blackmore, who is based at the University of the West of England.

A survey carried out in Bristol of about 200 adults and 120 children found that many had had strange experiences at least once. Some 33 per cent of children claimed they had seen a ghost while only 12 per cent of adults said they had seen one. Out-of-body experiences, in which people believe they are flying over their body and floating across rooms, streets or fields, were cited by a third of those interviewed.

Walking up to feel a presence, normally described as an evil one, in the room has happened to 56 per cent of children and 68 per cent of adults. False awakenings, in which someone believes they have woken

up but is really still dreaming, is an experience reportedly shared by 57 per cent of children and 82 per cent of adults.

About 2 per cent of the population believe they have been abducted by aliens and Dr Blackmore said she believes they are suffering from a phenomenon known as sleep paralysis. When people dream, their bodies become temporarily paralysed, preventing them acting out their dreams and endangering themselves. Her research has found that about 45 per cent of people become paralysed before they fall asleep or when they wake up at least once in their lives. "Normally you know nothing about sleep paralysis. However, occasionally something goes wrong with the mechanism, for

example if you are very tired, overworked, excited or worried," Dr Blackmore said.

The researcher has gathered more than 100 cases of the phenomenon which confirm her suspicions that "alien abductions" are linked with this kind of paralysis. "There are certain features that come up again and again. There are strange whining noises. One described loud screaming and high-pitched laughter and another said she had experienced a roaring noise in her head," Dr Blackmore told the British Association.

Many report feeling vibrations and "shakings and judders" and others talk of figures at the foot of the bed. There are pressing sensations like alien hands holding the

sleep-paralysed person's fingers or forcing themselves out of their body.

Dr Blackmore, who is set to carry out laboratory tests, is convinced that electrical firings of different parts of the brain and a combination of sleep paralysis in many cases is the key to scores of supernatural experiences. "It is known that sense of presence can be created by stimulating the temporal lobes of the brain. Stimulating the temporal lobes with electrodes can give rise to out-of-body experiences and mystical experiences," she said.

Dr Blackmore said some people had more active or unstable temporal lobes than others. This had been linked with artistic talent.

Leading article page 19

Telepathy 'more widespread than is thought'

MOST people may have some psychic or telepathic ability, a leading researcher into the paranormal said at the festival yesterday. Experiments across the world had found evidence that appeared to show that people were aware of facts which they could not have found out through normal perception.

Dr Deborah Delaney, of Edinburgh

University's psychology department admitted there were phenomena that scientists could not yet explain and should not dismiss out of hand. "We have a group of consistent findings across a quite large number of studies that are indicating that something that we currently do not understand is going on. We cannot explain it. But that is not

to say we are not dealing with some type of error not yet recognised. If so it could be affecting all our science."

Dr Delaney added that psychic ability might be spread widely but unevenly among the population. "It's like music. There would be Mozarts and there would be people with virtually no ability. Most of us would be somewhere in between."

Know the right way to put your baby to sleep

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

BEAN bags filled with polystyrene balls were once props without which no university student's room was complete. Twenty years ago they symbolised freedom from parents and their traditional furniture.

More recently, it is the family dog that seems to have monopolised the bean bag and the generation who once sat and slept on the bags are now parents themselves. All parents should heed the warning in a report in the *American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*, and which is also being carried in Britain by the magazine *General Practitioner*.

American researchers have studied 35 cases of babies who died after being put to sleep on a bean bag. All were found face down on the bag at the time of death. Half the children were less than two months old and in most cases, after a post-mortem examination, the cause of death was given as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

The foundation says the temperature of a baby's room is of importance, and recommends that it be kept at between 18C and 21C. New research has led experts to suggest that when babies are put to bed they should have their cot made up so that their feet touch the foot of the cot. A bed made in this way prevents the children from struggling under the covers.

When babies' beds are made in such a way that their heads are against the top end, as is more usually the case, they can smother down but that can be dangerous.

In several recent cases, babies who have died suddenly have been found with their blankets over their heads and they are thought to have become overheated. This can cause sudden infant death.

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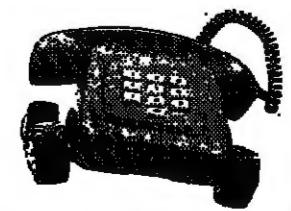
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READERS are invited to a forum where Tony Blair, the leader of the Labour Party since July 1994, will set out his political vision and priorities for a new Britain. The audience will have the opportunity to question Mr Blair's views on a raft of policy areas, from taxation to the minimum wage, the National Health Service to education.

Chaired by Peter Stothard, Editor of *The Times*, the forum marks the publication of Mr Blair's book, *New Britain — My Vision of a Young Country* (Fourth Estate, £8.99), and will be at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, on Thursday, September 19 at 7.30pm.

Tickets at £10 (£7.50 concessions) include £2 off the price of Mr Blair's book and are available by telephoning 0171-467 1613, by faxing the coupon below to 0171-467 1600, or by sending the coupon with your remittances to Dillons the Bookstore, 32 Gower Street, London WC1E 6EQ, where tickets can also be bought.

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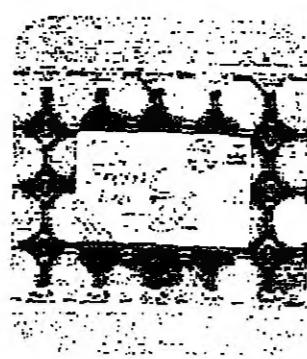
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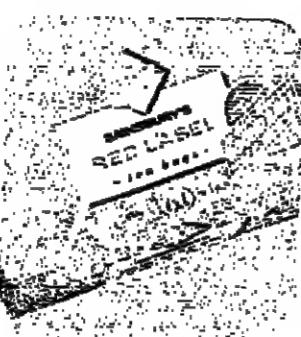
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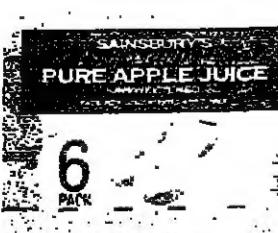
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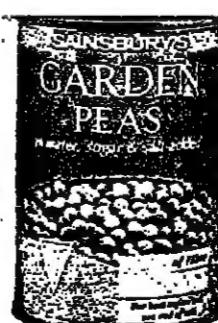
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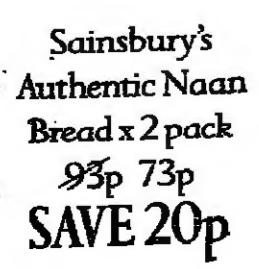
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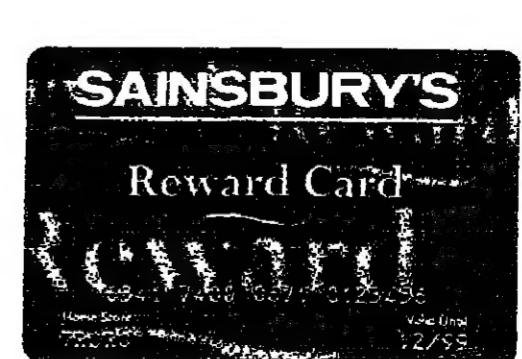
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Police guard five Republicans who bought Protestant's business from bank

Loyalists threaten revenge for farmer's eviction

TREVOR MORRIDE

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

LOYALIST terrorists have threatened to kill a group of Irish businessmen who bought a large farm in the Irish Republic from a Protestant family who had been evicted from the land.

Irish police have provided tight security for five members of the board of Donegal Creameries after they had been contacted by a terrorist from the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) who said that the eviction in Co Donegal was sectarian. The UFF also threatened to kill security men and a Dublin accountant who had been involved in the eviction of Eric Graham and his family from their 3,000-acre estate near Burnfoot last month.

The UFF leadership is understood to have dissociated itself from the threat, which was issued by the organisation's north Antrim and Londonderry brigade. There are now fears that the move by one of the UFF's most brutal

groups, which murdered seven people in a gun attack on a Co Londonderry bar in 1993, could mark a widening of the feud among loyalists.

The terrorists acted last week a fortnight after the Grahams had been evicted by bailiffs wearing balaclavas and carrying sledgehammers. The family bought the farm for £3 million in 1989, but stopped making mortgage payments to the National Irish Bank in 1992 after a series of disagreements over a £2.3 million loan. The receivers were called in four months later and an eviction order granted by the High Court in Dublin.

Last week Donegal Creameries, which is a co-operative, bought the farm from the National Irish Bank for £3.7 million. The company said it moved quickly to ensure that the farm's 413,000-gallon milk quota would remain in Co Donegal. John Keon, managing director of Donegal Creameries, who received the first death threat in an anonymous telephone call on Friday, said he was astonished by claims that the purchase of the farm was an attempt to "land-grab" from Protestants. Mr Keon is a Roman Catholic, but the four other board members who have received threats are Protestants.

He said: "We have a multi-denominational board and until now we have never paid attention to whether anyone is a Protestant or a Catholic. My impression is that the UFF may have been given an inadequate version of events."

Mr Graham, who ran the farm with his brother and father, dissociated his family from the threats and said he had no connection with loyalist paramilitaries. "I know there are people who felt that Donegal Creameries were land-grabbing from members of the minority community in Donegal when they bought the farm," he said. "But we have no control over what extreme elements can do."

The UFF said it issued the threat after coming under intense pressure to help Protestant farmers in Burnfoot, which is a few miles from the border. A spokesman said: "The feeling up here is very, very strong. Nobody has done anything for the Grahams or



As masked bailiffs move in on Eric Graham's farm, top, the Rev Rodney Sterritt carries one of his son-in-law's children from her home

the Protestant farmers. The perception is that an entire Protestant community is being persecuted."

Donegal is one of the Ulster counties which was not included in Northern Ireland when the country was partitioned in the 1920s. The county has a sizeable Protestant population, most of whom have integrated well into the Republic. However, some feel

isolated and echo the thoughts of an Ulster landlord who said in 1920 that the Protestants of Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan were thrown to the wolves when Ireland was partitioned.

□ The British and Irish Governments will decide today whether to expel the fringe loyalist parties from multiparty talks in Northern Ireland after recent death threats

against two militant loyalists by the Protestant paramilitary leadership.

The Democratic Unionists called for the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Democratic Party, the political wings of the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association, to be expelled after they refused to condemn the death threats. The DUP claimed that the loyalist par-

ties had breached the Mitchell principles on non-violence, to which all participants at the Stormont talks had signed up, by not condemning the loyalist paramilitary death threat against Portadown loyalist Billy Wright.

In a joint paper presented to a full session of the talks yesterday, the PUP and the UDP said that they subscribed to the Mitchell principles.

They added that they resolutely opposed the use or threat of violence from whatever source.

David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionists, said that the paper might resolve the issue if it covered the loyalists' response to the death threats. It is understood that the two governments were keen to work out a way of allowing the loyalists to remain at the talks.

Royal reprint

Postcard maker J. Arthur Dixon is dropping the letters HRH from its best-selling postcards of Diana, Princess of Wales. Officials at Balmoral ordered the removal of cards carrying the dropped title from the castle's souvenir shop last week.

Priest charged

Father James Channing-Pearce, 56, who taught taught maths and physics at the Jesuit-run Stonyhurst College, near Blackburn, has been charged with indecently assaulting boys at the school. He will appear in court in November on four charges.

Horse attacked

Lady, a 22-year-old shire horse that was a favourite with visitors to Elvaston Castle Country Park in Derbyshire, died after its genitals were slashed with a knife. The horse was rescued from ill-treatment eight years ago.

Back condition

A judge granted a back-pain sufferer bail at Southwark Crown Court on condition that he went to bed for a week so he could be tried sitting rather than lying. Graham Peacock, 51, denies conspiring to produce cannabis.

Kittiwake deaths

Hundreds of dead kittiwakes have been found along the Tyneside coastline. Scientists believe a bacterial infection could be responsible and that thousands more of the gulls, which come ashore only to nest, may have perished.

Gallbladder loss

Karen Parker, 29, is appealing for the return of three gallstones which she had removed last week. They were in a jar in her car which was stolen in Aspley, Nottingham. The car was later recovered but the jar is missing.

Ticket prices tumble as new rail firms take a tough line

By VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

PRICE wars are breaking out on railways as new companies take over former British Rail routes and cheap fares are used to tempt travellers.

The most cut-throat competition so far appears to be between Network SouthCentral, now owned by the French utility CGEA, and its rival Gatwick Express, now owned by the National Express coach group. One advertisement hits at higher prices and lack of night services on the Gatwick Express. In response, Gatwick Express plans a 24-hour service and is issuing a book of ten tickets after offering special group travel

discounts. More tempting deals for passengers are expected. Nine of the proposed 25 rail franchises have been awarded and another four companies are expected to get the go-ahead this month. New companies have targeted specific routes because, unlike British Rail, they are not responsible for a national network.

Chiltern Railways is promoting a £20 day-return fare between London and Birmingham. The journey takes 40 minutes longer than on InterCity West Coast, its rival line, and uses less familiar stations such as Marylebone

in London and Snow Hill in Birmingham. The £20 day return and the £23 monthly return were on offer when Chiltern was part of BR, but there was little marketing budget available or corporate will to publicise specific deals.

West Coast and East Coast InterCity have entered into direct competition with EasyJet, the cut-price air company which offers a £29 single fare between Scotland and Luton airport. The rail companies have responded by introducing a £29 Scotland-to-London return, knocking £5 off the cheapest return previously available.

Courts 'too hard on children'

By FRANCES GIBB

CHILDREN who go to court as victims or witnesses are often treated so badly that prosecutions fail, according to a report published yesterday.

The children often have to wait hours or even days before giving evidence and receive little preparation for the court experience, says the report by Victim Support, the charity for victims of crime.

The report, based on the experiences of 1,000 children in 20 Crown Courts, found children are not always allowed to give evidence by closed-circuit TV. An 11-year-old girl became incoherent when she found she had to give evidence in open court. The case was dismissed.

A special Child Witness Pack published with the backing of the Lord Chancellor's Department three years ago was used for only 25 per cent of children.

Helen Reeves, director of Victim Support, called for national guidelines on preparation, reducing waiting times to a minimum and allowing children to wait at home.

The Princess Royal, patron of Victim Support, who was at the launch of the report, welcomed the findings.

£376,000 for teacher in car crash

By JOHN O'LEARY

A TEACHER who sustained multiple injuries in a car crash while taking pupils on an A-level study visit has won record damages of £376,000.

John Calvert, a history teacher at Knottingley High School, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, was a passenger in a colleague's car that had been pressed into service for a study trip because the school minibus had failed a safety check. He is wheelchair-bound as a result of the collision near York and has never returned to work.

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Spy-watchers in Australia scrap over story of historian's Order of Lenin

By DAVID BENTLEY

FIVE years after his death, Australia's most eminent historian is being demonised as a traitor, after allegations by a Brisbane newspaper. *The Courier-Mail*, that he wore the Order of Lenin.

Professor Manning Clark, who wrote *A History of Australia* and was named Australian of the Year in 1981, may have used his position to spread communist propaganda. The newspaper devoted eight broadsheet pages to his socialist credentials, citing Australian Security Intelligence Organisation files supporting the view that Clark was "communistically inclined".

Not everyone is convinced. His son, Andrew, who edits *The Sun*,

Herald in Sydney, told readers: "These claims are fabrications. They are based on malicious title-tame."

Central to the controversy is Les Murray, a poet who allegedly saw Clark wearing the Soviet Union's highest honour at a dinner party.

The story reached Peter Kelly, a retired journalist, who recalled a previous conversation in the Seventies with Geoffrey Fairbairn, a Canberra academic who had been upset by seeing Clark at the Soviet Embassy, apparently wearing the same medal.

Kelly, former press secretary to the Liberal politician William McMahon in the Sixties, held his silence for a quarter of a century out of consideration, he says, for Clark's family.

When a Melbourne academic, Stuart McIntyre, delivered the inaugural Manning Clark Memorial Lecture, "Who Are The True Believers?" in 1994, Kelly decided that Clark had been canonised by the Australian Labor Party and blew the whistle.

Clark's followers were outraged and articles for and against him appeared in the press, questioning the authenticity of the insignia. A KGB double agent also stepped into the fray.

John Howard, the Prime Minister, said he disagreed with Clark's "black armband" approach to the past. Opposition leader Kim Beazley dismissed the claims as "oddball".

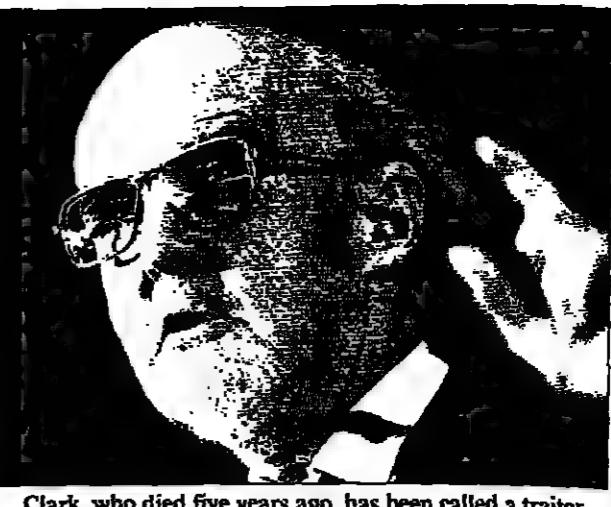
David Marr of *The Sydney Morning Herald* attacked *The Courier-Mail's* exposé as "evil guess-work" and "one of the greatest axe jobs in the history of Australia journalism". Bill Hayden, the former Governor-General, saw it as a piece of "outrageous self-indulgence".

For Professor Claudio Veliz, emeritus professor of sociology at Melbourne's La Trobe University, whose criticism of Clark's approach to history caused a stir in 1982, the allegations supported what he had been saying all along.

"What is really amiss about Clark, I suspect, is that deep within he did not like Australia and thought Australians a melancholy, brawling lot, but could not bring himself to say so." Meanwhile, the contentious medal is nowhere to be found.

Clark's widow, Dymphna, recalls her husband receiving a Soviet decoration when he visited Moscow in 1970 to deliver a lecture on Captain Cook. She does not think it was the Order of Lenin "or there would have been some 'hoo-ha'". Another poet, Geoffrey Dutton, remembers Clark's Soviet medal as a commemorative gift that looked nothing like the Order of Lenin and was worn by the historian only as a joke.

Mr Murray, the only living witness to the wearing of the "gong", told *The Courier-Mail*: "Manning Clark himself drew attention to the medal by telling me that it was the Order of Lenin he was wearing. He said it was not what the students wear, 'it is the real thing'."



Clark, who died five years ago, has been called a traitor

Shop ban on album over gun sale lyric

FROM GILES WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES

SHERYL CROW, the husky singer who rose to stardom with a song called *All I Wanna Do*, has so offended America's largest supermarket chain that it is refusing to sell her latest album.

The quarrel is over one of Ms Crow's lyrics, which says that Wal-Mart, which has 2,265 branches, sells guns to children. As she sings in *Low Is a Good Thing*: "Watch out sister, watch our brother, watch our children as they kill each other, with a gun they bought at the Wal-Mart discount stores".

Wal-Mart says it is boycotting the album for ethical reasons rather than self-interest. "Selling a record implying behaviour that is against all we stand for is something we could not profit from," a spokesman said.

The chain continues to profit from gun sales, however. It stopped selling guns over the counter in 1994, but sells them through mail-order catalogues, which gun-control advocates say is a relatively easy way for youngsters to obtain deadly weapons.

Analysis say Wal-Mart might have sold up to 400,000 copies of the album, but Ms Crow and her label, A&M Records, have not indicated that they will change the offending lyric, which has won them free front-page publicity.

Investigators study sworn statement as Whitewater partner goes to jail

Disgraced Clinton aide denies slur against First Lady

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

DICK MORRIS, President Clinton's disgraced political strategist, has sent congressional investigators a sworn statement denying that he told a prostitute that Hillary Clinton was responsible for improperly requisitioning hundreds of confidential FBI files on Republican officials.

Mr Morris, who resigned after a newspaper disclosed his affair with the prostitute last month, said that an entry in her diary that quoted him as blaming a "paranoid" Mrs Clinton for requisitioning the files was inaccurate.

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William Clinger, the committee's Republican chairman, had given Mr Morris until Monday night to confirm or deny the remarks attributed to him by Ms Rowlands. His statement was delivered a few hours before that deadline, but it was unclear whether it would satisfy the committee.

Mr Morris said he would wait to see whether Mr Morris could provide records to support his claim before deciding whether to demand that he and possibly Ms Rowlands, should give evidence in person before being moved to Faulkner county jail.

Mr Clinger was sentenced last month to two years in prison for accepting an illegal loan. She refused to tell the grand jury whether Mr Clinton had helped her to obtain that loan, claiming that Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater special prosecutor, was out to destroy the President. Her original prison sentence was due to begin on September 30, but she is now behind bars for contempt of court.

□ Perot's choice: Ross Perot, the Reform Party's presidential candidate, was expected to announce his running-mate on CBS television last night.

secretary, said: "I did not know you sought the truth in supermarket tabloids."

In a separate development, Susan McDougal, the Clintons' former Whitehouse business partner, spent her first full day in an Arkansas jail yesterday for refusing to give evidence against the President before a federal grand jury.

Ms McDougal had surrendered herself to US marshals on Monday morning and spent more than seven hours in a Little Rock courthouse cell before being moved to Faulkner county jail.

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Susan McDougal leaves Little Rock courthouse in chains on her way to prison

US coast braced for another hurricane

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

THE great storm bowl of the Caribbean has produced another killer wind with Hurricane Hortense, which yesterday gathered force over the region's warm waters and appeared to be heading for the American mainland.

Hortense, the fourth hurricane this summer, left four people dead in Puerto Rico and yesterday hit the island of Hispaniola, which is shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Ferocious rainstorms gave way to flash floods in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and on Hispaniola's north coast. Storm surges, mudslides and tornados accompanied the main storm.

The Turks and Caicos islands were placed on hurricane alert and in the American Virgin Islands the sale of rum was banned during the bad weather to prevent looting.

Forecasters predicted that the hurricane will gather force tonight and may arrive off Florida on Friday. There is expected to make a sharp right turn towards Georgia and the Carolinas. The coastal towns in those states were devastated last week by Hurricane Fran. Earlier in the season Hurricanes Bertha and Edouard left trails of damage.

An early estimate by the Insurance Information Institute put the damage caused by Fran as high as \$1 billion (£645 million). Federal relief continued to be distributed in the region and floods left low-lying regions, including Washington DC, resembling swamps. Jim Hunt, Governor of North Carolina, said that Fran had been "the worst disaster we have had this century".

□ Peking: Typhoon Sally killed at least 114 people and left 110 missing, many of them fishermen caught at sea, when it slammed into southern China this week, officials said yesterday. (Reuters)

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Remains of Perón to be exhumed

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI, SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

A WOMAN who has been fighting a lengthy legal battle to prove that she is the illegitimate daughter of Juan Perón, the late Argentine President, won the right yesterday to have his body exhumed from a Buenos Aires cemetery so that DNA tests can be carried out.

Maria Holgado, 62, who bears a striking resemblance to Perón, hopes that the tests will prove that she is the rightful heir to fortunes he is believed to have hidden in secret Swiss bank accounts.

Senora Holgado, who lives in Madrid and is the author of a book called *Perón, My Father*, arrived in Buenos Aires late on Monday night and yesterday received unprecedented permission from a court to exhume the Presi-

dent's remains. He died on July 1, 1974, at the age of 78.

Senora Holgado started her legal battle to prove that her mother, Cecilia Demarchi, had been Perón's mistress when he was married to his first wife, and that she was conceived during that time. She claims to have met Perón and have pictures of herself with him as a child.

"My mother married a man called Eugenio Holgado in 1928 and she had a daughter who died in 1933. Soon after they separated, and it was at that time that my mother met the young Juan Domingo Perón," said Senora Holgado.

Her claim has come as a surprise to most Argentinians who had always believed Perón was impotent. Some have branded Senora Hol-

gado a gravedigger, saying she is just after the millions that Perón stashed away during the last years of his disastrous rule.

Perón was first elected President in 1945 with the backing of the military. He was deposed in 1955 and remained in exile until 1973 before he returned to Argentina for another year in office.

He had professed a mixture of populism and fascism and founded a political movement which seemed to offer more to satisfy aspirations of the working classes than the traditional political elites. But his promise was lost amid authoritarianism, corruption and contempt for democratic freedoms. However, he also attracted a cult following which is still strong today.

Perón's body has been at the centre of controversy before his burial some cut off and stole both his hands, presumably for the fingerprints required to access secret bank accounts.

It seems unlikely that the court would have agreed to exhume the body without having substantial reason.

Perón's third and last surviving wife, Maria Estela Martinez de Perón, a former dancer, who also lives in Madrid, has put up the most vociferous opposition to the exhumation.

She is adamant that her husband was impotent.

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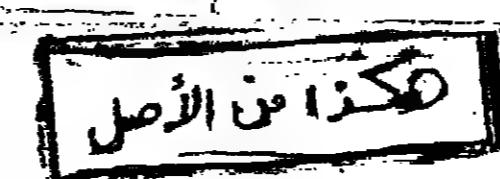
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Investigators raid police as scandals widen in Belgium

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

BELGIAN investigators yesterday carried out raids in which 25 people, including 11 police officers, were questioned in connection with Marc Dutroux, the confessed paedophile murderer. All 23 were released later without charges, but police were examining documents seized in searches of their homes.

The raids round the southern city of Charleroi, including one at police headquarters, were part of an attempt by Michel Bourlet, the prosecutor, to unravel a stolen vehicle trade said to have involved Dutroux and to have been conducted with police complicity. One of the ten arrested in the Dutroux affair, Inspector Georges Zibot, is alleged to have provided vehicles to the child abductor.

Dutroux, 39, is held responsible for the torture and murder of two teenagers and two eight-year-olds. He is alleged to have been at the centre of a paedophile trade with international connections.

A parallel team of investigating judges in nearby Liège questioned Alain van der Biest, a former minister charged on Sunday with the murder in 1991 of André Cools, a former Deputy Prime Minister. The killing has blighted the Belgian political scene for five years. Willy Claeys, the former head of state, is awaiting trial with three other former ministers in connection with a corruption scandal exposed by the murder investigation.

Mr van der Biest, a flamboyant novelist and literature professor, is alleged to have paid the Italian Mafia to shoot Cools, a senior figure in the French-speaking Socialist Par-



Dehaene promised full disclosure of failures

and political boss of Liège, in July 1991. Mr van der Biest insists he has been framed.

Coming amid the uproar over the Dutroux case, the sudden arrest of Mr van der Biest and four others over the Cools affair has compounded a crisis of confidence in Belgium's legal and political system.

"Every revelation is feeding the revelation," *La Libre Belgique* said. "Belgians are asking what is rotten in the halls of justice."

King Albert II of the Belgians yesterday called for deep reforms to ensure a more effective and humane system of justice. In a move that took him beyond the bounds of his constitutional role, the King said that those involved in criminal investigations "must be encouraged to pursue their efforts to the end".

The remark was aimed at the judicial bungling and alleged obstruction in the Dutroux and Cools inquiries. The King handed Stefano de Clercq, the Justice Minister, a "list of observations and questions" about the handling of

the Dutroux case. With polls showing that 90 per cent of Belgians distrust the legal system, Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Prime Minister, promised on Monday to ensure full disclosure of the authorities' failure to take action earlier in both the Cools and Dutroux cases. "We have to investigate the investigation," Mr Dehaene said.

Prosecutors have so far cited no direct link between the Cools and Dutroux cases. However, a connection is being widely made by the media, as disclosures pour out on alleged cosy relations among politicians, police and criminals, including the Mafia, in the big cities of French-speaking southeast Belgium.

Adding to the sense of connection is the involvement of several judicial and police figures in both cases. Jean-Marc Connerot, the investigating magistrate in charge of the Dutroux case, was at the centre of a storm two years ago when he was removed from the Cools investigation. Mr Connerot, who is based in Neuchâtel, wrote to King Albert at the time saying he knew who the murderers were. He had earlier produced evidence that linked Mr van der Biest to the killings.

As a sub-plot in the two affairs, there have been allegations that investigating judges, who usually enjoy a link with one or other of the main Belgian political blocs, failed to pursue their cases with zeal or were removed when they did so. The police superintendent in charge of co-ordinating the Cools investigation since 1992 resigned from the post on Sunday after allegations he had mishandled the case.

TO CATCALLS and gibles from the opposition, the German Government unveiled an austerity budget for 1997 which cuts federal spending in an all-out effort to qualify for European monetary union.

Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, must shepherd the budget through a four-day debate this week and secure a parliamentary vote on sepa-

rate spending cuts on Friday. Although the Government is likely to survive that vote, the budget is giving ample ammunition to the opposition Social Democrats. The chance that Germany may miss the Maastricht criteria for monetary union and the sacrifices demanded by the Chancellor spell trouble in Bonn.

"You claim that the budget will meet the Maastricht criteria," thundered the opposition spokeswoman Ingrid Mar-

häus-Maier. "Wrong. The situation of the state finances is now truly dramatic."

The 1997 performance of the German economy will determine whether it is fit for European monetary union. Should it fall short, the whole project would be endangered. Herr Waigel and other government speakers pledged an "uncompromising adherence" to the Maastricht criteria, which include the need to keep the deficit to 3 per cent of gross

domestic product. Herr Waigel revised upwards the German growth estimate for 1996 from 0.75 per cent to 1 per cent and argued that the budget and austerity package would reduce Germany's deficit to 2.5 per cent of GDP in 1997. According to figures he set out, the 1997 deficit should not exceed DM56.5 billion (E24.4 billion). But even the Government concedes that it could reach nearly DM70 billion. An idea that old age pen-

sions could be taxed has been floated as government planners search desperately for ways of boosting tax revenue.

The threat to pensions, more than any spending cut, has played into the hands of the Social Democrats, who for the first time sense that they may be able to win an election against Helmut Kohl on the basis of his Government's bad housekeeping. Trade unions have promised protests against the plans.

Bonn faces four-day battle over austerity budget

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

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Cardinal attacks 'Padania' scheme

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

THREE days before Italy's separatist Northern League begins its much publicised push for independence with a march, a senior Roman Catholic leader added the voice of the Church yesterday to the growing chorus of opposition to plans to declare "Padania" a separate state.

Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, Archbishop of Milan, which the League considers one of its strongholds, accused the League of "adventurism and demagoguery".

Cardinal Martini did not name the Northern League or Umberto Bossi, its often crude and unpredictable leader. But his remarks in Milan cathedral were universally interpreted as being directed at the League in general and Signor Bossi in particular.

The cardinal said that those who sought secession from the state defiled their followers by holding out the false promise of "magic formulas" and "simplistic drastic solutions". Responsible politicians, he said, resisted all forms of "demagoguery" and "populism", which could have grave consequences. "No cultural or institutional model which sanctions social or territorial exclusivity is morally acceptable," he said.

La Repubblica said Cardinal Martini had put the Church "in the front line" of those defending the Risorgimento and Italian unity. In a response which will have offended many, Signor Bossi made a mock sign of blessing on television, saying: "Peace and blessings, Cardinal". An opinion poll in *La Repubblica* indicated that 63 per cent of Italian think Signor Bossi is a buffoon.

Chernomyrdin takes charge as Yeltsin awaits operation

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN gave Viktor Chernomyrdin, his Prime Minister, new powers to run the Russian security ministries yesterday while he is on holiday before having a heart operation. But Sergei Yashin, the presidential press secretary, said control of the "nuclear button" would remain with Mr Yeltsin.

All important decisions concerning the armed forces, Interior Ministry and intelligence services, normally a presidential preserve, will have to be "co-ordinated" with Mr Chernomyrdin for the duration of Mr Yeltsin's holiday, the press secretary said.

Yesterday's formula appeared to be a compromise designed to forestall a potentially dangerous power struggle while Mr Yeltsin is undergoing surgery. It effectively puts Mr Chernomyrdin in charge of running the country. If Mr Yeltsin remains ill and has to give up the

month. The political complexities have arisen because of the vertical bias in the Russian hierarchy. There is no Vice-President, while the constitution is vague about the ground rules for how and when power should be delegated to the Prime Minister if the President is unable to carry on.

Mr Yeltsin, in an interview with the magazine *Izog*, sought to dispel the image of a remote, sick leader which has gathered around him since he was re-elected on July 3. He said he had decided to go public about his heart problems in order to reassure the Russian people that he was still in control.

The times when the supreme "boss" would appear once a year somewhere on the dais of the mausoleum and a fragile equilibrium between the different rivals could be destroyed.

The President, who is resting outside Moscow, is due to have a heart bypass operation, probably within the next

two weeks. "I am convinced that they will never return," he said.

Judge Friedrich-Karl Föhring drew hisses and shouts of "swine" from the public gallery.

Swimming fraud won six medals

BUDAPEST: Half of Hungary's swimming team, which won six Olympic medals, got to Atlanta on the basis of fictitious qualification times from an event never held.

Government officials yesterday confirmed newspaper reports of the fraud and blamed the Hungarian Swimming Federation for submitting the false records. Eleven of the 22-member Hungarian team had not attained Olympic qualification times at national and regional meets. So a phantom meet was held and imaginary times were entered, said Rezo Gallov, who heads the Government's National Gymnastics and Sports office.

Two swimmers were even disqualified for the sake of authenticity. MTL, the state news agency, said yesterday that Tamas Gyurfas, head of the federation, had resigned.

Mr Gallov said those involved had to be called to account but no medals were in jeopardy.

The Royal Logistic Corps. They learnt of her plight and offered to help. They succeeded in rebuilding the house to its prewar state in five weeks.

The honorary consul and her husband were forced to leave the house in the mountains above Dubrovnik after a shell fired from a ship in the Adriatic crashed through their sitting-room window and blew out the roof. The couple escaped unharmed and spent the next five weeks at an hotel in Dubrovnik amid heavy shelling. Many of the shells damaged buildings inside the city walls, some of which date back to the 14th century.

Now, however, the two-storey farmhouse belonging to Sara Marojevic, which overlooks the historic walled city on the Dalmatian coast, has been rebuilt by six British soldiers serving with Nato's Implementation Force (Ifor) in the Croatian port of Split.

Mrs Marojevic, born in Liverpool but married to a Croat, has been able to return to her home for the first time since the war. The farmhouse has been in her husband's family for 500 years.

The six soldiers were from 522 Squadron 23 Pioneer Regiment, part of

Former generals jailed over shoot-to-kill orders at Wall

BY ROGER BOYES

SIX former East German generals were jailed yesterday for ordering border guards to shoot refugees trying to escape to the West.

Their trial was regarded as the most complex of the hearings that have been held in Germany since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. The longest sentence, six-and-a-half years, was imposed on Klaus Dieter Baumgarten.

Dozens of ordinary border guards have been found guilty of murder since they pulled the trigger during escape attempts. Heinz Kessler, a former Defence Minister, and other members of the East German Defence Council were given custodial sentences because it could be shown that they had helped to frame the shoot-to-kill policy. But the six generals sentenced yesterday were implementing orders from above.

The generals do not have to go to prison until their appeal is heard. All are hoping that the constitutional court will

quash Kessler's earlier sentence and thus invalidate their own. "This is a political verdict," Baumgarten said as he was led out of the courtroom.

The defence team argued that East Germany was merely exercising its right in international law to protect its sovereign borders. The judge, however, decided that the shooting of unarmed defectors violated human rights.

New documents discovered by investigators into the files of the East German Stasi secret police have given further muscle to state prosecutors. The papers show an exchange between top security chiefs in which it was recommended that nobody should be shot on the East-West border during the time of the World Youth Festival in 1973 in East Berlin, as it would have been bad publicity. That suggests there were clear shooting instructions and that all officers on border duty were involved.

Army's peace Pioneers raise the roof

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE home of the honorary British consul in Dubrovnik has been an empty shell since it was damaged during an artillery attack five years ago in the early stages of the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Now, however, the two-storey farmhouse belonging to Sara Marojevic, which overlooks the historic walled city on the Dalmatian coast, has been rebuilt by six British soldiers serving with Nato's Implementation Force (Ifor) in the Croatian port of Split.

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Honorary consul Sara Marojevic with the six British soldiers and Murphy, their mascot

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Dole criticises Clinton strategy after Sulaimaniya falls to Saddam's Kurdish allies

US warns of new strikes at repaired Iraqi sites

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE Pentagon said last night that President Saddam Hussein had ignored American warnings and was rebuilding air defence missile sites hit by American cruise missile attacks on southern Iraq.

This intelligence was divulged as the fall of Sulaimaniya on Monday left the Clinton Administration scrambling to refute criticism of last week's actions. The Republicans said that American credibility had been undermined and that Saddam had been left in control of northern Iraq for the first time since the Gulf War.

A Pentagon official said up to four surface-to-air missile sites had been supplied with new radars since the attack — in defiance of a warning by General John Shalikashvili, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that such moves could prompt renewed strikes. In two attacks last week, 44 missiles hit 15 Iraqi air defence systems.

"The violation will occur if they illuminate any allied aircraft, American, British or

French and they fire," the official said. "That would precipitate a strike from us."

The disclosures appeared to be an attempt to deflect attention from President Clinton's domestic difficulties over the decision to attack Iraq in the first place.

Bob Dole, the Republican presidential candidate, has seized on the latest evidence that Saddam helped Kurdish Democratic Party forces to overrun Sulaimaniya, the final stronghold of their rivals, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. He said the reports of continued strife and killings in northern Iraq, including the execution of Iraqi dissidents backed by Washington and the apparent entrenchment of Iraqi troops around Arbil, raised serious questions about whether Mr Clinton's strategy had advanced American interests in the region.

"In Iraq, as in Bosnia, the Clinton Administration should be careful about making claims of success that events on the ground may not substantiate, and about giving



Guerrillas of the Kurdistan Democratic Party shout slogans as they drive through Sulaimaniya yesterday after expelling their rivals

assurances that it is unable or unwilling to fulfil, because the credibility of the United States is at stake," Mr Dole said.

Although America this week mounted an emergency effort to relocate hundreds of Kurds involved in the humanitarian relief programme in northern Iraq, Mr Clinton has launched no operation to rescue stranded Iraqi dissidents backed by the CIA. It was

reported yesterday that more than 100 CIA-backed opponents of Saddam had been executed months before the American raid.

Last winter the CIA targeted the group, the Iraqi National Accord, as the organisation with the greatest potential to topple Saddam, but it was infiltrated by Iraqi security in June and those in Iraq associated with the organisation

were "wrapped up", according to the Americans.

Another organisation, the Iraqi National Congress, has been almost defunct since the capture of Arbil. Some members have been executed. Despite the CIA's connections with the group, the White House made clear yesterday that it had no intention of helping to evacuate about 200 members still trapped in hos-

tile territory at the mountain fortress of Salahuddin.

The intelligence community in Washington, attempting to wash its hands of the situation, said a team of CIA officers secretly stationed in Salahuddin had provided ample advance warning to members of the Iraqi National Congress about the KDP attack. It appears that the agency had become disenchanted

with the organisation's inability to undermine Saddam.

Clearly concerned by growing criticism of its military efforts, the White House maintained that America's main concerns were protecting the Kurdish population and ensuring that Iraq does not violate the no-fly zone.

Simon Jenkins, page 18
Letters, page 19

WORLD SUMMARY

Ship full of sheep has sunk

Sydney: The search for an abandoned ship carrying 67,000 Australian sheep has been called off after the discovery of debris. "This indicates the vessel has sunk," Lloyd Beeby, a spokesman for the Australian Meat and Livestock Corp, said yesterday.

The debris was found just before the four-day search for the *Uniceb* was called off north of the Seychelles. The crew abandoned the ship, en route to Jordan, after fire broke out. They heard two explosions as they drifted in lifeboats. There were no further sightings of the vessel, even though it was left in a busy shipping lane. (Reuters)

Archbishop burnt to death

Bujumbura: Monsignor Joachim Ruhuna, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Gitega province in Burundi, was burnt to death when Huu rebels ambushed his vehicle, an army spokesman said.

A deacon who arrived on the scene soon after the attack on Monday found the bodies of the archbishop and a nun on fire in their vehicle. (AFP)

Pope will not have check-up

Rome: The Vatican denied a report that the Pope, 76, plans to undergo hospital tests this month to determine the cause of a recurrent intestinal illness. Joaquin Navarro-Valls, his spokesman, said last week that the illness could be linked to a 1981 assassination attempt when the Pope was wounded in the stomach. (AP)

Australia to get 180mph train

Sydney: Australian government ministers have finally approved a \$2 billion (£1 billion) project to build a 180mph train (Rachel Bridge writes). Bickering between state and federal governments has delayed for more than ten years the development of the train, which will run from Sydney to Canberra.

Senators hit at gay marriages

Washington: As a Hawaiian court began hearing a case that could lead to the legalisation of homosexual marriages in that state (Martin Fletcher writes), senators here were preparing to approve an Act that would let states disregard gay marriages legalised elsewhere in America.

Rafsanjani to visit Pretoria

Johannesburg: President Rafsanjani of Iran arrives in South Africa tomorrow for a state visit (Ingo Gilmore writes). He is on a six-nation African tour to win support for his Government, which is accused of America of sponsoring terrorism.

Hung up

Gaza City: Faced with a multi-million-pound bill, Yassir Arafat has barred Palestinian Authority officials from making overseas phone calls. One line reportedly ran up a bill of £212,000 in a month. (AP)



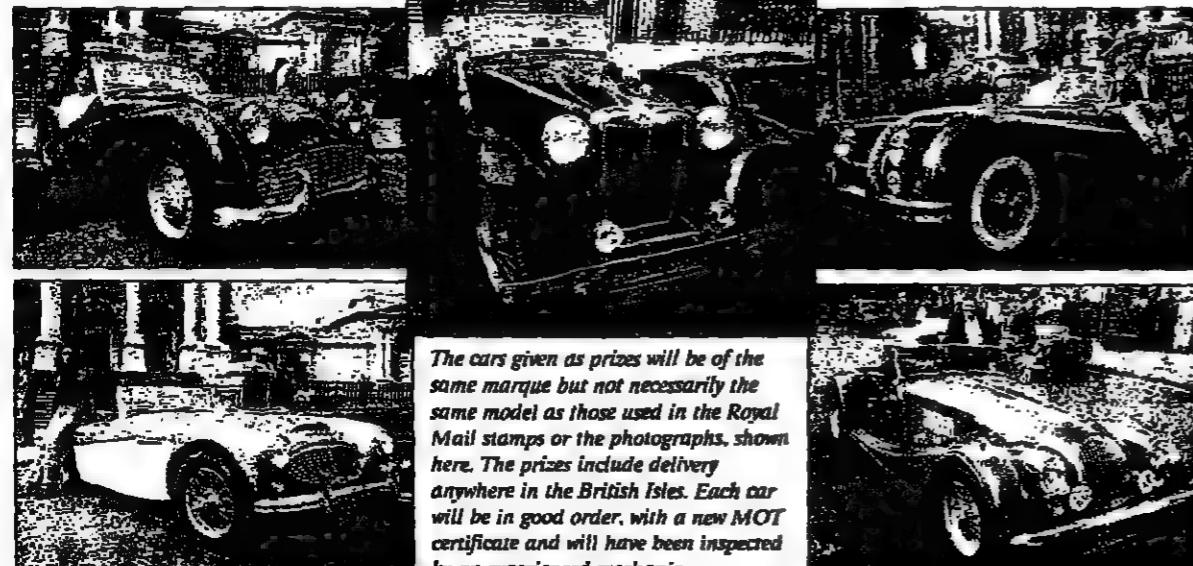
A group of Kurdish women flee the fighting with their belongings on a tractor trailer

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THE TIMES

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Royal Mail marks British motoring's celebration of two centenaries this year with a set of five special stamps to be launched on Tuesday, October 1, ranging in denominations from 20p to 63p. There is more to a stamp than just an attractive design as 60 million collectors know. An Edward VII sixpenny stamp issued in March 1904 and overprinted with the words IR OFFICIAL, is worth about £85,000 in mint condition.

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CHANGING TIMES

Netanyahu rejects US peace calls

BY TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER

BINYAMIN Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, has brushed aside American calls for prompt action to revive the Middle East peace process, but said yesterday he was more optimistic about reaching an accord with the Palestinians than with Syria.

Insisting that he was determined to pursue peace with Syria after talks with President Clinton, Mr Netanyahu had rejected Administration calls to pull out Israeli troops from the West Bank city of Hebron. He said his Government was not bound by the previous Israeli Government's informal land-for-peace agreement with Damascus.

Mr Netanyahu told businessmen in New York yesterday: "At a certain point we will discover whether Syria is interested in peace. I'm more sanguine about the Palestinian plan."

Damascus, meanwhile, said Mr Netanyahu had put another nail in the peace process's coffin. The official *Al-Baath* newspaper said Israel must recognise that the Golan Heights should be returned to Syria.

The extent of the penetration by the Russian mafia of Israeli

Israel acts to weed out Russian mafia

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI police have drawn up a list of 35 leading members of the Russian mafia living in the Jewish state and have asked that Eli Suissa, the Interior Minister, take prompt action to deport them.

According to police sources, the suspects are involved in a wide range of criminal activity including arms smuggling, the illicit sale of radioactive material, gambling networks, white slavery and international prostitution.

Equally worrying from the point of view of Israel's future is the claim that they have been using vast sums of cash generated by the mafia in the former Soviet Union to buy off local and national politicians.

Yesterday Israel Radio reported that the Palestinian police had also launched a crackdown on Russian mafia activities, ordering a halt to the building of a big casino and hotel complex in the newly autonomous Jericho region after intelligence reports that underworld figures from the former Soviet Union had infiltrated the scheme designed to attract gamblers from Israel, where casinos are banned.

Damascus, meanwhile, said Mr Netanyahu had put another nail in the peace process's coffin. The official *Al-Baath* newspaper said Israel must recognise that the Golan Heights should be returned to Syria.

The extent of the penetration by the Russian mafia of Israeli

society, disclosed in a rash of police-inspired media reports, has shocked many Israelis. According to one senior police officer, at least £25 million of the estimated £19 million ferried out of former Soviet Union by the mafia and its rivals in recent years is thought to have been invested in Israel.

Asked whether claims that Israel could be put in a situation similar to that faced by America earlier this century, where underworld figures had much control over national life by means of their political influence, Moshe Shahal, the former Police Minister, told Israel Radio: "Yes, it is relevant." He would not be drawn further, saying that it was a matter for the police to handle.

According to police sources, the list of suspects was first handed to Avigdor Kahalani, the Internal Security Minister. The move came after a Cabinet briefing two weeks ago on the rise in organised crime in the country. Most of this is in the hands of former Soviet citizens, known generically as the Russian mafia although some come from Ukraine and other parts of the former Soviet Union.

Red tape smothers mixed romance

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

A STAR-CROSSED love affair between an Arab man and a Jewish woman, which began nearly 45 years ago, has been blighted again by threats of exile for three of their children after hopes that the 1994 Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty had at last brought the family happiness.

The family's plight has touched hearts on both sides of the Arab-Israeli divide and led to pressure on the Israeli Ministry of Interior to bend its usually rigid bureaucratic procedures.

Yediot Ahronot reported that the roots of the muddle go back to the ancient crusader port of Acre, in Israel, where in 1952 Waneta Cohen, a young Jewish girl of Bulgarian

extraction, became pregnant by her 18-year-old Muslim neighbour, Hassan Arthawi. Both youngsters were discovered by their parents and Hassan was jailed for statutory rape. But after his release the couple escaped to Jordan, leaving behind their baby daughter to be raised by Waneta's relatives.

They might have remained in Jordan but for the 1994 treaty signed by the late Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's Prime Minister, and King Hussein which prompted them to try to return to their families, who had forgiven them and wanted them to return.

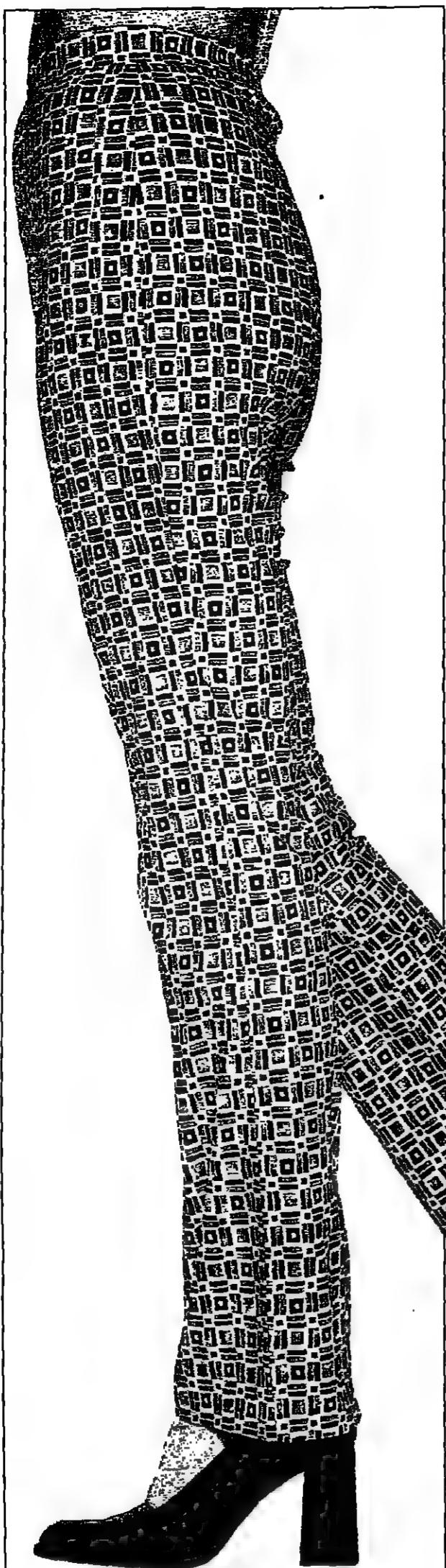
A year ago, according to friends, permission was granted for the couple to return to Israel with their three sons, aged 26, 23 and 21.

ren held as Jordanian citizens had expired and that all three would be deported to the Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan from which they had come. The parents, as Israeli citizens, were allowed to stay.

An Interior Ministry spokeswoman said: "The issue is being looked into."



Making a comeback with flare



Flared trousers are staging a return this autumn says Style Editor, Grace Bradberry but this time in the shape of the highly flattering bootcuts

Flares have been flapping around for several seasons now, but only the very tall and lean have so far dared to buy them. And with good reason. They have an unerring ability to distort the body, shortening legs and widening hips.

But this autumn, flares really are making a comeback, though in a modified form. Bootcut trousers, so called because they kick out at the hem to allow room for high heels or boots, have made a comeback.

So what's different about bootcuts? Quite simply, they are flattering. The best ones elongate the leg, slim the thigh, and create a flat stomach. Worn long over the foot, they allow for a pair of heels, lengthening the legs still further.

This season's definitive pants were by Gucci. But they were also seen strutting the catwalk shows of Chanel, Anna Molinari and others, making already tall models look as though they were on stilts.

Joseph Etchedgui, the designer who heads the Joseph empire, has made something of a speciality of the cut. The fabric, he declares, is crucial. "The ideal fabric is not particularly traditional, but rather fluid, with a bit of body. Stretch is important."

For daytime, Joseph has taken what appear to be traditional tailoring fabrics, but mixed them with stretch fibres, so that the trousers hold their shape while following the body's curves.

As a result, the shape can be sharply defined. "For this winter, they should be worn quite tight," says Joseph. "And the kick should definitely begin just below the knee."

But the most important point to look for when buying bootcut trousers is that they actually fit at the thighs. Too tight, and they'll create a sausage effect, with the leg bulging out between the knee and hip.

Whatever you choose to wear with the trousers, it should continue the long line. Slim-fitting shirts and turtle necks work well, but if you want to de-emphasise the bust then a jacket is probably the best option.

The one by Joseph (shown in the main picture), is short, neat and has a slightly shrunken silhouette. Leathers and suedes are everywhere this autumn, but beware anything too heavy as they will thicken the legs and blur the effect of what should be a sharply defined shape.

Finally, if you're looking for something more casual than the trousers featured here, then Levi's have brought back their classic boot-cut jeans at around £50 a pair, though different stores carry different prices.

And Farah trousers, skeletons in the cupboard of Seventies adolescence, are also back, with what they describe as "a new look for the chemical generation".

Naf Naf green stretch cotton optical print trousers, £49.95. (0171-580 7463).
Photographer: NANN and MAN
Model: Jayne Winkler, Setlist
Hair and make-up: Alex Ballo
Fashion Assistant: Bola Siwoku



French Connection maple stretch bootcut hipsters with a jeans-like look, £60. 249 Regent St, W1.



Kookai brown stretch velcro hipster, cut from heavy cotton with Lycra, £24.99. Available from high street branches nationwide.



Jigsaw flat-front herringbone trousers with low-cut waistband and hip pockets, £72. 126-127 New Bond St, W1, and 39-43 King St, Manchester.



Plain Sud's burgundy trousers, £129. Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, SW7.



Whistles black/grey stripe wool twill trousers with very low waistband, £110. 27 Sloane Sq, SW1. Also at 9 High St, Oxford.



Dorothy Perkins chocolate brown boot cut gaberdine trousers with a narrow waistband and a hint of flare, £25, branches nationwide.

Catwalk glam or sleek slick?

FRENCH CONNECTION: Front pockets and belt loops on waistband give a jeans-like appearance to these. Cut short in the leg to stop above the ankle with a kick at the hem.

KOOKAI: Deep waistband which fits low on hips. Cut from heavy cotton with Lycra which ensures a very close fit. Short leg length reveals the ankle. Good as an everyday basic trouser.

JIGSAW: A well-tailored herringbone tweed trouser, cut slim but not too tight on leg. Low-cut waistband, belt loops, practical hip pockets and a back pocket. Generous leg length which can be worn with any height of heel. An excellent work trouser.

PLAIN SUD: No waistband. Low cut on hips. Can be worn belted. Cut extremely long in the length, so requires a high-heeled boot. A pronounced flare from knee to hem gives a dramatic and very flattering silhouette.

WHISTLES: Black/grey stripe wool twill with very low waistband. The pinstripes effectively slim and lengthen the leg. Extra long length and designed to be worn with a high-heeled boot or shoe.

DOROTHY PERKINS: Gaberdine trousers with a simple styling and a narrow waistband. Cut loose on the leg with a hint of flare. Let down by the thinness of fabric.

NAF NAF: Green stretch cotton print trouser. Very slim fitting casual trouser cut to hug the hips. Unusual front patch pockets on hips and back. It provides a very flattering silhouette.

BOLA SIWOKU:

The range isn't cheap. An eyeshadow duo costs £22, while sheer lipsticks, with names like Barbarella and Belle du Jour, are £15.50. From Space NK, 41 Earlham Street, Covent Garden, London, tel 0171-379 7030.

SLICKED back hair is the style to have this autumn. It may look simple but, frankly, it's a real performance. First you need to dry the hair straight, then apply just enough and no more of a

suitable finishing product. The truly fashion-conscious should look for Oribe Pomades (pronounced Or-bay apparently), which come in two quilt-creating strengths and are priced £8.50.

For real fashion victims, there are eight different colours for the antithesis of the natural look. These tint the hair then wash out, and cost £9.50. Available through Beauty Quest, a new mail-order club. Tel: 0541 505 000, or from Space NK.

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50 من الأصل



Despite their early friendship, Dr Runcie believed that if Terry Waite "was going to be an international negotiator, he oughtn't to be on my staff"

Terry always enjoyed the centre stage

Meeting Terry Waite for the first time, I was not prepared for his size — he towers above everyone and is broadly built to match. At times he indulged in the relaxed bullying that a very big man can afford. I liked this side of him, but was less comfortable with what I soon found myself labelling his "holy" aspect — a solemn and self-consciously "religious" manner into which he was always slipping, quite unlike anything that I had experienced with Runcie.

I asked Waite why he had never been ordained. "For a very simple reason. I don't believe I have a priestly vocation. I have valued the freedom to move and work in a variety of ways..." Did he feel, early on, that some great task was waiting for him, did he have a sense of looking for a dramatic role? "I don't believe so, although I've always been drawn towards situations that are very difficult, virtually impossible."

With hindsight, his extraordinary career as a superman liberator of hostages begins to look like a calculated reaction to Runcie's fence-sitting. "I'd never thought of that," said Waite. "If we look at the hostage episodes, it was quite clear that there was a point of very considerable principle."

"Also it became clear over Beirut that the Foreign Office was not getting anywhere, and knew very little, and would value an involvement by us. It seemed to me that if we claimed to be the church of England, and not a sectarian group... we ought to do it. And if we were to do it, we ought not to turn back when the going got tough."

At what point did he feel Runcie's support for him was waning? "Well, we were not having early success. We were in touch with Syria, we were in touch with the Lebanese, we were in touch with, oh, dozens of people, but nothing really seemed to be moving. And I think Robert felt, look, what would it say to men who were in prison [they actually wrote to the Archbishop] saying: 'Please help us' if



In February 1981 Terry Waite aided the release of three Anglican hostages from Iran

we said, sorry, we're pulling out because it's too tough... So I went back, I said, I damn well will, even if this costs me my life." That may sound arrogant, but I was willing because it was so important."

In a sense, the half-heartedness of Runcie's support had made him go even further? "Absolutely. I admit to certain uncharitable thoughts, when I was... in the Lebanon... And my life was on the line every day. And I thought, am I really supported from home? And I wasn't."

TOMORROW

Runcie and Women

"I had girlfriends from the day when I first discovered what you could do in the back row of a cinema"

In the review of Waite's *Taken on Trust*, Robert Fisk, who had been *The Times* correspondent in Beirut during the hostage crisis, is very sceptical about Waite's position over Iran. He writes:

"After talking to the State Department he [Waite] banged down the phone with the words 'Bastards!' Even at that early stage, it seems, the Americans were two-timing Terry Waite."

I asked Waite what his feeling had been when the Iran hostage story broke. The picture he paints of North in his book is so cloak-and-dagger that it can scarcely have surprised him to see North's double-dealing revealed. "... My feeling was one of absolute sickness, because I realised that there was a chance here of myself being compromised, of the whole thing collapsing totally... I mean, that's why I got on the phone to him immediately." He actually phoned North: "Yes, and asked him what the hell was going on. He simply said 'Oh don't worry, I'll be all right'."

I suggested to Waite that it was fair to say that he had left a lot of questions unanswered in his book, *Taken on Trust*. Edited extracts from Robert Runcie: *The Reluctant Archbishop*, by Humphrey Carpenter, published next month by Hodder and Stoughton, £20. © 1996 Humphrey Carpenter

One was that while Waite fully described the physical discomforts of captivity, and the psychological uncertainty, I didn't get the feeling of absolute and utter despair which he must, surely, have felt at least from time to time. "No, I didn't. I don't think I did feel absolute and utter despair... I said to myself, as I say in the book, death would be preferable to this living death. But I didn't particularly want to die in those circumstances, with my family and friends not knowing how I died."

Another area he didn't go into in the book was his relations with the other hostages when they were confined. "I have two reasons for that. One is that the book was written in my head, in captivity; it's primarily a book written from solitary. And when you move from solitary to be with others, a very different process takes place — you're into personal communication. The book, in a sense, ends when I join the others."

I could understand his not wanting to write about the others. But there must have been quite a lot of conflict between them all; surely that was when he must have learnt most about himself, seeing himself as they saw him? "Yes, there was conflict, but I don't think it was necessarily the conflict that one could really get hold of, because almost for the whole of that final year I was sick... And a chronic irritation to the others because of it."

But did he have the experience, confined with the others, of seeing himself through other people's eyes? "Oh yes, of course, it's the most terrible thing. I'm not blind to that. I know my own failings."

I told Runcie I was puzzled that Waite could convince himself that he could spend the rest of his life sitting in his cottage in Suffolk, writing books. Runcie replied: "He wants to be in action again."

We are all well-versed in the horrors of the evil stepmother.

Smacking problems for step-parents in the new family order

Everyone knows what they think about the thwacked boy who is taking his case to Europe. The row clings on, covering all-too-familiar tracks. We are familiar with the arguments the anti-smackers champion his case, seeing in it hope that the smacking of children will, finally, be outlawed over here. Smackers denounce all this modern, soft euro-folly, shaking their heads and sorrowfully wishing that reason and authority will prevail.

But neither reaction is to the point here. This is not a case about whether parents should or should not be allowed to smack their children. The difficulty, however, is that it is always difficult to stay out of that particular argument. It is so tempting to weigh in, to remark that even pro-smackers might see that going at a child regularly with a stick is beyond the realms of "reasonable chastisement", that it does not even constitute smacking.

John Major's contribution here is notably flawed. God, how depressing it is to have as one's Prime Minister a man who says: "My children were dealt with at home by Norma and I in a way that was appropriate and personal to them." If you think it is the thought that counts, then you might concede him this one — but by Norma and I?

If this case were simply about what rights parents have over their children and what rights the state has over parents, we could gaily carry on down this particular road. But this would be spectacularly to miss the point: this case is not about the family but about the step-family, an entirely different matter.

With more than half of all first marriages (and a notable chunk of second marriages) ending in divorce, the step-family is the new norm. And because it has become so familiar, we think we are at home with the new rules. We are not. And they are different. That should, surely, be the case.

To some extent we do acknowledge this extraordinarily sensitive difference, although not explicitly. I think, though, that it is shown in the nervousness with which we are conducting this debate: the way we skirt around the details. That it was the step-father wielding the stick is certainly mentioned, as is the fact that the boy's natural father is supporting his son's action. But there is a curious silence about the implications of all this. Oh, perhaps it is insinuated that there might be a little tension there, some conflict. But let's take it out of the personal arena. The relationship between the two husbands, one ex, one current, in this case, is not in itself the point. But we are right to look at the relationship, generally, between a child and a step-parent. We are wrong to presume that, give or take a bit of blood, things are the same or ever could be.

Theoretically, one could insist that there is no difference who is wielding the stick. I am not sure I would want to argue the toss, but I think we are right to feel nervous about any step-parent's chastisement of a child. We do not own our children but we are responsible for them, and I mean viscerally so, rather than simply legally. There are many real fathers who beat their children — the blood tie does not ensure better treatment — but we understand the often murky depths of the bond between parent and child. What is the bond between step-parent and child? Why should one even exist? The relationship is between the adults.

We are all well-versed in the horrors of the evil stepmother.

Whatever the judges decide, who makes the rules when slapping adult and slapped child are unrelated by blood?

Reading children's stories to my daughter, I am appalled at the intensity and frequency of her depiction. The cruel step-father is largely absent from the children's canon, but the stories that do exist tell us enough about a child's fear of betrayal in the home.

To be sure, one must presume that on the whole a child's experience of step-parents is not a tortured one, although there are bound to be difficulties. A mother of unruly children might well,



Nigella Lawson

after exhausting years as a single parent, like to have a man around to take them in hand. That is, after all, what she will have been told they need (I would concur, with the proviso that the man they need is their father). She might be grateful to be taken on and taken in together with the children (we are sensitive enough about paternity to have, culturally, a shared nervousness about one man's acceptance of another man's child) and might be relieved to be given support in disciplining them.

But her children, surely, would be right to resent this interloper, to wonder what right he has to tell them what to do, to take parental responsibility for them, let alone to hit them. To the mother it might look generous, to the child it would inevitably seem mean.

Perhaps this is too cynical, but I cannot help thinking that with such a large part of the electorate consisting of step-families, we are a long way from seeing any politician with his eye on his vote doing anything to acknowledge these new dangers or to tackle the new taboos. It is up to us. And maybe it is better that way — only we cannot, must not, shrug it.

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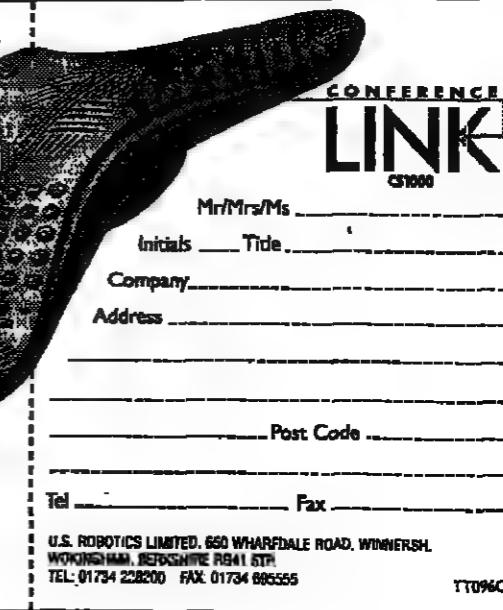
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TT094C

Alan Coren



■ Man has a new best friend, but the police don't want to know

I do not want to write this piece. Not only is it going to be a really gruesome piece, which means that many of you will not want to read it — especially if it is your habit to prop *The Times* against the cruet set while you spoon down your morning roughage — but it is also going to be the sort of piece which generates sackfuls of replies, many of them written in the spidery hand and emerald ink of the completely demented.

That is because the piece is about cats. You will therefore instantly appreciate that though neither I may want to write it nor you to read it, duty miaoos. For British cats are suddenly more important than they have ever been, not simply for themselves but for their prime position as cultural signifiers, now that their population, as of this year's per census, outnumbers, for the first time, that of dogs. I do not know why this has happened. They do not fetch our slippers, they do not bite our burglars, they do not even bring our sticks back, yet nonetheless cats have now achieved a national significance second, quadrupedally at least, to none.

But it is not, it seems, significant enough. I know this because, when I went to my gate this morning to collect the milk, there was a dead cat in the road. At some earlier point it had been flattened, and it was all too pitiably evident that the later the morning had grown, the flatter had grown the cat, so that matters had now reached a point where some kind of expert would be required to separate it from the tarmac. And, furthermore, to notify the bereaved. So I rang the police.

To discover, to my astonishment, the insignificance of what is now man's best friend. For while the police will pull out all the official stops to deal with a dead, or merely missing, dog, when it comes to cats, *de minimis non curat lex*.

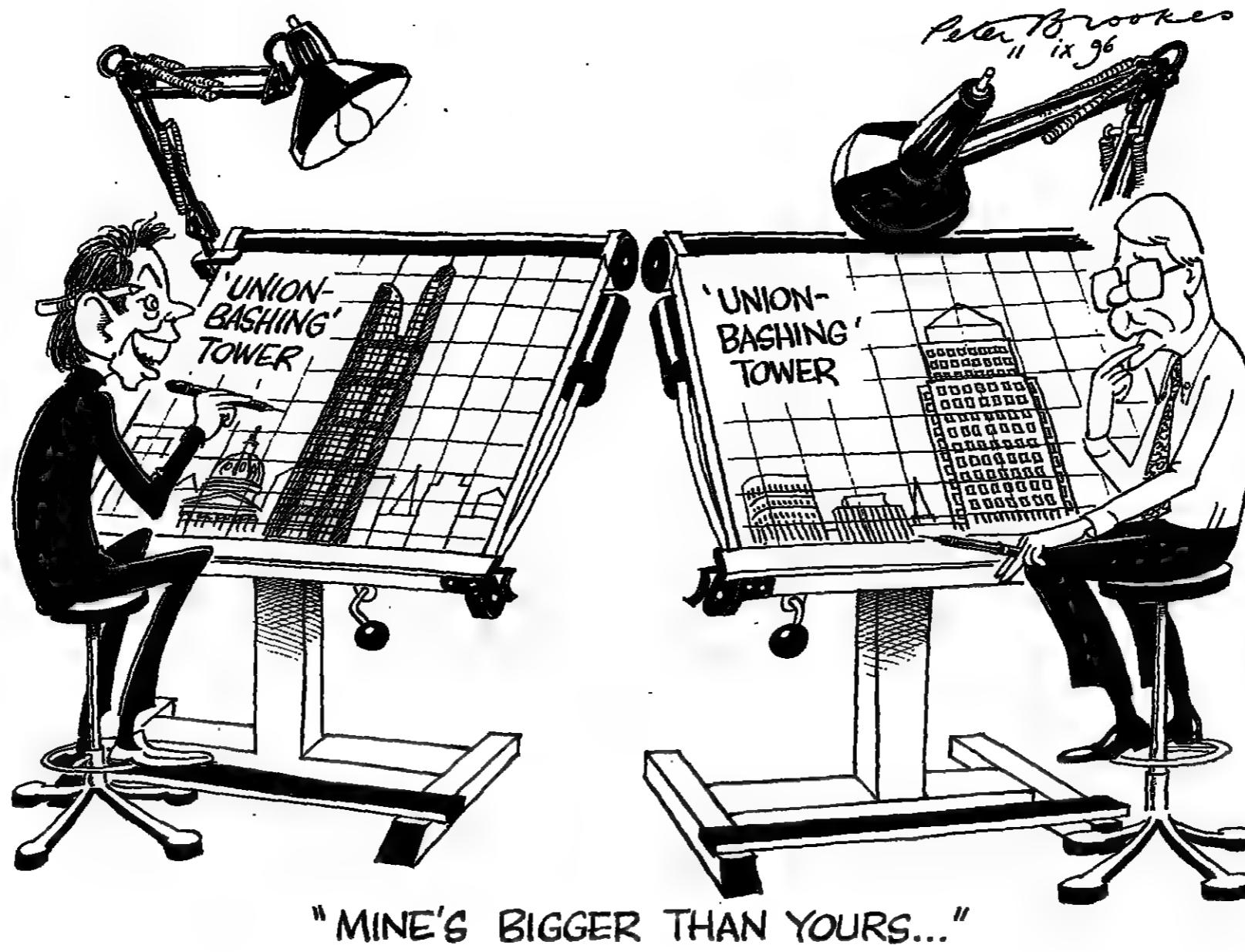
The cat, alive or dead, has no constabulary status. It is, I was informed in the Bill's dream jargon, non-negotiable. So what do I do? I said. You phone Barnet Council's Highway Cleaning Department, said the Bill. They, it added tenderly, will send a bloke round to scrape it up.

Scrape it up? Someone loved this cat — indeed probably still does not yet knowing that it will never again pop through the catflap, having reached a state where it could as easily be slid under the door. The owner should be compassionately told what had happened, not left to speculate and fret, or wander the streets day and night calling its name, putting out bowls of milk or marrowbone jelly destined only to attract unpet files. More yet, they should be told that it was dead so that they could grieve, and, more still, be given the opportunity to retrieve their loved one, roll it up, and bury it in some dappled garden spot, erect a headstone, bedeck the poignant mound with catnip, all that.

What am I to do for the best? Two hours have passed since I rang the Highway Cleaning Department, but their grim scraper hasn't yet arrived, and I can't decide what to do when he does: ask him for the scrapings — even though he is sure to claim he is not empowered to release these under Section 12 of the Highways (Scrapping) Act 1934, folding money may sometimes spot a loophole — and divine some way of finding their proper resting place? If so, how? Wait for a note to be put on a gate about a missing cat, with a description now utterly unhelpful and a name to which it is no longer in a position to answer? Put one on my own asking if anyone has lost a tyre-coloured moggy three feet square? And how long, never mind where, should I be expected to keep feline remains, the weather still being mild for the time of year?

Two further cars have just rendered the problem yet more insoluble: by the time the Council turns up, it could be a question of cat, what cat? I trust this is not some kind of prank, we are up to here with hedgehogs as it is. So can any good emerge from all this? Well, just possibly, for though this cat's fate is sadly sealed, it may unseat the fate of others: I ask for the law to be changed to make cats notifiable, so that they fall within the reach of its long arm. That is why I have written this piece.

Despite a strong suspicion that the Bill will have wanted me to write it even less than I did.



"MINE'S BIGGER THAN YOURS..."

Proud to be a cynic

Clinton has betrayed the Kurds. So why do Major and Blair grovel to him?

In October 1983, America invaded the Caribbean mini-state of Grenada to topple a nasty regime. It did so in defiance of a United Nations resolution and of international law. The invasion was shambolic. American "precision bombing" wiped out Grenada's mental hospital, killing some 50 patients. Margaret Thatcher publicly berated Ronald Reagan, despite his support for her Falklands campaign a year earlier. Friends must speak honestly to friends, she said. Wrong is wrong. Great powers must respect state borders if they are to expect others to respect them. I was proud of Mrs Thatcher that day.

This week, Britain has grovelled before Bill Clinton's bombing of Iraq. Both John Major and Tony Blair felt obliged to support it. America's other allies behaved like sovereign states. The French, the Germans, even the Irish, thought and acted for themselves. Every British minister and diplomat privately thought Washington's action pure opportunism. But the whoosh of an American missile had knees jerking to attention all over London. Uncle Sam is right, even if wrong. It was a humiliating spectacle.

Mr Clinton's bombing succeeded in its unspoken goal. As today's *Time* magazine trumpets, his domestic popularity has risen, with a 70 per cent approval for the bombing and for "using military force to remove Saddam from power". The same poll showed 60 per cent opposed to doing that in the only way possible, by deploying ground troops. But consistency has never been a requisite of democracy.

Too bad if Saddam is now stronger. Too bad if America's tactic of bolstering Kurdistan is in ruins. Too bad if the CIA is forced to rat on its friends and leave them to be shot in the streets of Arbil. Too bad if millions of dollars are wasted, an alliance is wrecked and an unknown number of people are maimed or killed. The President's poll rating is up. The operation is a success.

But why does Britain need to be party to all this? Why does Mr Major have to claim, absurdly, that the bombing was "needed to prevent another humanitarian disaster"? Why does Labour's Robin Cook gabb about the bombing being to "protect the safe heavens"? He could read in *The Independent* (as his MI6-briefed staff must already have told him) the revelation that America had refused to protect these heavens as recently as last July. As for the "pin-point" accuracy of

the missiles, over which the British press drooled at the weekend, Mr Major found himself supporting the second missile raid because the first "was not as successful as one might have wished".

When British diplomats are in craven mode they cite Lord Melbourne's famous plea for support not when he was in the right, but when he was in the wrong. Yet Mr Clinton was not seeking the right or wrong thing to do in Iraq. He was acting from self-interest. So too were the French and the Arab states who opposed the American action. Iraq has become a supermarket where any statesman may shop for domestic profit. Britain might have some interest in Saddam's downfall, or in weakening him, or in helping the Kurds. But no sane person could believe that Tomahawks would do any such things.

As Charles Glass points out in this week's *TLS*, the history of Western deviousness in Kurdistan knows no bounds. It began with Britain's bombing of Kurdish villages in the 1920s. The Americans succoured the Kurdish leader, Mulla Barzani, against Saddam in the 1970s, then rated on him. They then succoured his son, Massoud Barzani, and last month rated on him. He learned from his father's mistake and chose Saddam's support as the lesser evil. To be anyone's worse evil than Saddam Hussein takes some doing. Nato has done it.

What the West did in 1991 was reprehensible. Faced with distressing television images of refugees, Nato declared Kurdistan safe. This was a cynical, media-driven act which Nato knew it could not honour. As with Bosnia, the outside world was half-guaranteeing the security of a half-sovereign state. There are some 20 million Kurds — making the world's largest nation without a state — who foolishly thought in 1991 that their *de facto* independence might be a legacy of the Gulf War. They were deceived. They appear to have chosen a period of cowed stability under the Turkish-Iraqi dicatorship.

A bizarre group of lobbyists, from the

Tories' Lord Archer to Labour's Ann Clwyd, have ridden to the cause of the Kurdish faction opposed to Barzani, the Iran-backed PUK. They wish the West to renew its guarantee to Kurdistan as a whole and put troops on the ground. This parades the most reckless of romantic Arabist fantasies. A Western military guarantee to Kurdistan was a cruel deceit in 1991: today it would be meaningless. Which Kurds? Whose Kurdistan? The last remnants of the 1991 guarantee — some 200 CIA agents — are now being rescued from the mountains, leaving their erstwhile friends to be shot by fellow Kurds.

Those Britons demanding war on Saddam are "killing Kruger with their mouths". Hundreds if not thousands of Iraqis must have died as a direct result of America's hamfisted covert intervention against Saddam since 1990. Foreign involvement in other people's internal wars should be privatised. It should be left to mercenaries, philanthropists and expatriates. When Britons sought to defeat Franco in the 1930s, they did so as private citizens and with their own lives at risk, not from the comfort of armchairs and television studios.

On this page last week, Lawrence Freedman criticised those who doubt America's motives in Iraq. He did so on the eccentric grounds that America is "setting Saddam rules to live by". He said, in effect, that any bombing by Washington is better than none and deserves support. An occasional missile sent round the globe reminds the world who is boss.

This is a revival of the policy of "containment by overkill", advocated by Henry Kissinger in Laos and Cambodia during the Vietnam war. The pure terrorism of American military hardware,

goes the argument, should make lesser mortals rein back on their atrocities. America can always bomb them into the Dark Ages. They should beware. But

the truth is that foreign policy in a democracy remains, as always, a subset of domestic policy. It is about display, show, bravado and self-interest. The shambles this week in Kurdistan was a passing sideshow. As a Washington official reportedly told Barzani last month, when he pleaded for help against his rivals, "We have bigger fish to fry than the Kurds." Small wonder he smelt American treachery and went for help to Saddam. Only after Barzani and his new Iraqi backers secured the easy fall of Arbil did Washington send missiles, "as a message to Saddam". We have seen this past week what that message was: Kurds need not vote for Bill Clinton but Americans should.

If that is cynical, I am proud to be a cynic. How else can an American look a Kurd in the eye just now? Why Mr Major had to put his name to such a trick beats me. Why Mr Blair had to agree with him is a yet greater mystery.

Retrievers

ELECTRONIC tags are being inserted into the Queen's dogs to prevent them from going missing. The idea was suggested to Her Majesty two years ago, after Prince Charles lost Pooh, his Jack Russell, which was never found despite an intensive dog-hunt around the Balmoral estate.

Two royal spaniels have had microchips implanted. The size of grains of rice, these contain data about their owner. If lost, the spaniels can be traced by a scanner and the Queen's many other dogs — corgis, labradors and so on — are expected to be tagged soon.

"Her Majesty wanted to show her support for the RSPCA-backed tagging system," says the Palace.

The Prince of Wales, who took on a replacement puppy after Pooh went missing down a rabbit hole, is said to be considering tagging his dogs as well. But retainers at the Palace are unsure about the experiment. Many would like to see the last of the ankle-biting mutts.

• Eric Cantona has found a new game. After painting, acting, theatrical patronage and literary criticism he has turned to chess.

His favoured haunt of late has been Café Renoir, a small French-style joint in Manchester frequented by students. There he holds court over a chess board, discussing strategies through cappuccino-fuelled afternoons.

Eye-eye

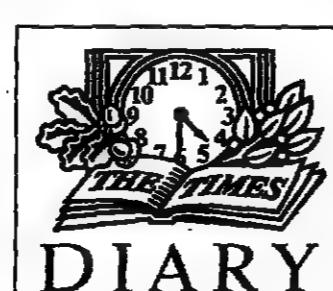
THURSDAY night saw the Duke of York supping with the Royal

College of Ophthalmologists in London. The evening grew bibulous as the eye-men spotted the optics behind the bar.

Fortunately, the Duke doesn't have to worry about missing the last bus. A helicopter was on hand to sweep him back to his naval base in Portland, Dorset. The next morning, however, he felt a familiar throbbing behind the eyes. He dozed, woke, and dozed again until he saw the time. Diving headlong into his kit, he made it to his first engagement of the day, a plaque unveiling in Portland — an apologetic 15 minutes late.

• How do you fancy being Mr Blunkett's new guide dog?

• Jeff



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Big star

A HUGE star is to fill our screens. Washington Sixolo is the dome-bellied and chesty South African actor who plays King Lobengula, ruler of the Matabele, in the BBC's

forthcoming epic series about Cecil Rhodes. His friend is larger still.

When David Drury, the director, first met Sixolo, the mountain man was accompanied by an individual who dwarfed even him. The friend fixed Drury with a hard stare and listened in disarming silence as he outlined the plot. "I was talking about King Lobengula and felt increasingly uncomfortable as I realised that I hadn't researched the subject thoroughly," says Drury.

Only after he had finished did the biggest man reveal his identity. He is great grandson of the

Sixolo: man-mountain

King Lobengula, and declaring "It was so", he authorised the project, and Sixolo was secured.

Harrowing

OUR parliamentarians were left kicking their heels the other day when they turned out to play the Old Harrovians at the school, in a fixture that goes back many years.

A sunny day and perfect conditions, mused John Redwood, limbering up as he watched the groundsmen prepare the wicket. "Then I learnt from the groundsmen that the wicket wasn't being prepared for us, it was for a game the following weekend. Our match had been cancelled," he said. "Everybody on the team seemed to turn out, but nobody told us. Although it was nice to go back and do some work, it was a shame not to get some practice for the Europhile v Eurosceptic match we're planning."

Has landed

ORNITHOLOGICAL news wings its way from Ireland. The former Taoiseach Charles Haughey has been reunited with his pet sea eagle, which flew off four years ago. He likened the bird, with its horrid talons, to Margaret Thatcher. Haughey became acquainted



Bird in the hand

with two eagles — Maeve (female) and Aillil (male) — some years ago when he started tracking them on his island, Inis Mhicilín. He soon became adept at handling them. "I've dealt with Maeve in my day," he would explain. But she disappeared — only to reappear recently. "We were so excited," says Haughey. "She was flying so well."

P-H-S

Putting the V & A to shame

Marc Jordan on the National Portrait Gallery

THIS summer, the heritage world has again been agog at events at the Victoria and Albert Museum. First there was the unveiling of designs for a new £42 million building on its Boilerhouse site. It is possible that the glass-clad, fractured polygon designed by the Israeli architect Daniel Libeskind could be an ornament to London, but only on a site of its own, where it would be gallery and sculpture in one, like the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Inserted in the mellow Victorian terracotta of Exhibition Road, it would look plain silly. Then there was the series of roughshaps that led to the National Heritage Memorial Fund acquiring the Beckett chaise on behalf of the V & A for £4 million, a year after it had been offered privately to the British Museum for half that amount.

Less widely noticed, perhaps because camouflaged by the predictable *brouhaha* over the glass polygon, was the decision of the museum's new director Alan Borg to replace the current "voluntary" entrance charge with a compulsory one of £5 from the beginning of next month. Let us hope that Dr Borg's move is a cry for help and not a statement of professional conviction, since the past decade has seen an overall 50 per cent upward trend in the numbers of visitors to non-charging national museums, and a matching decline in visits to those that do.

After this it is pleasant to turn to a more uplifting tale, albeit about a smaller and less grand institution, but one that is just as central to our cultural life. Tonight the National Portrait Gallery, whose director, Charles Saumarez Smith recently reiterated his commitment to free entrance, opens its refurbished first-floor galleries, refuting with its 19th and earlier 20th-century collections. The project ought to be a cause for quiet satisfaction to Dr Saumarez Smith and the architect, Piers Gough. They have used the opportunity offered by building work necessary to renew the wiring, sprinklers and alarms to revive the mainly hidden 19th-century architecture of the existing rooms and to create an engaging new gallery within a neutral shell previously used for exhibitions.

Gough installed the Luyens exhibition in 1981 — one of the few occasions when that unlovely concrete bunker was a humane setting for art. He has brought a similarly restrained sense of theatre to his restoration of the old rooms at the Portrait Gallery, unblocking windows overlooking Orange Street, and many of the pictures are hung on clear glass walls. The contrast with the enfilade of 19th-century galleries is piquant. But it is subtle and intelligent too, reflecting the uniquely romantic brand of modernism which in this country succeeded the public solemnity of the pre-1914 world.

For the great, the good and the notorious of the first six decades of the 20th century, Gough has provided something quite different. To hide the new services, he has designed a swooping and curving ceiling that is reminiscent of a Thirties liner or the Festival of Britain. The room over which it presides is brightly lit by natural light from the tall windows overlooking Orange Street, and many of the pictures are hung on clear glass walls. The contrast with the enfilade of 19th-century galleries is piquant. But it is subtle and intelligent too, reflecting the uniquely romantic brand of modernism which in this country succeeded the public solemnity of the pre-1914 world.

The Portrait Gallery will not be resting on its laurels, however. Like everyone else, it has a millennium project — for which it is seeking a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Circumlocution in the building has always been awkward: around 70 per cent of visitors see the ground floor, but not many reach the top.

Jeremy Dixon and Edward Jones, architects of the Royal Opera House redevelopment, have proposed to build a new wing on the only available site, a narrow backyard that separates the gallery from the National Gallery. It will provide a basement lecture theatre, a mezzanine gallery to display properly the fine Tudor collection, which includes the great Holbein cartoon of Henry VIII.

Above all, it includes a handsome and spacious new entrance hall leading from the Victorian one, with a glass-sided escalator rising directly to the top floor. And on the roof will be a cafe with a glass-fronted loggia giving panoramic views across the rooftops of the National Gallery to Trafalgar Square, Whitehall and Westminster.

Earlier this year the gallery launched its centenary appeal. If it can raise £14 million towards the £16 million needed to open this new building in January 2000, it is hopeful of £12 million of lottery money. So far there have been promises of £1.7 million. There are all sorts of reasons why the continuing expansion should be supported, not least because in this relativistic and integrational age, the collection tells the story of the achievements of English history and the people who were and are the achievers. And there is a fine architectural irony: while Dixon Jones's building will have a particularly elegant and satisfying interior, it will be enveloped on all four sides by existing buildings, and so have no exterior at all.



TAINTED GOLD

Switzerland's behaviour is unworthy of a democracy

The Foreign Office report on Nazi gold is a fascinating account of greed, deception and double-dealing half a century ago. It does not admit to any British conspiracy to hide ill-gotten ingots in the Bank of England. But it does point to an almost unconscionable delay in overcoming the legal and bureaucratic obstacles that stood between the Nazis' victims, or their heirs and representatives, and the money plundered from them to fund Hitler's war machine.

More damningly, it points to the outrageous refusal by Switzerland, by far the largest beneficiary of German gold exports, to hand over more than a fraction of the huge sum of booty hidden in Swiss vaults. The issue is certainly one which the Swiss, with their tidy habit of hiding away past embarrassments, want to forget. Malcolm Rifkind should tell them bluntly during his visit next week that their behaviour has been immoral, selfish and unworthy of a democratic nation. He should demand that they step up their half-hearted response to regular inquiries by Holocaust victims.

The Foreign Office report, drawn from documents already declassified, is a crisp and well-compiled historical survey. It highlights, with the help of historical distance, the two awkward issues the Allies had to face in their relations with the neutral countries both during and after the war. How could they limit the economic dealings between Nazi Germany and countries such as Sweden and Switzerland without infringing their neutral status? And what legal instrument could they use after Hitler's defeat to ensure restitution of the gold to its rightful owners?

Britain's Ministry of Economic Warfare knew that Switzerland, and to a lesser extent Sweden and Portugal, were vital sources of foreign currency, which Berlin bought with gold seized from Jewish families and businesses and melted down. It favoured a tough approach to the Swiss, warning them that they would have to answer to the Allies if they continued accepting gold seized from occupied Europe. The Bank of England, however, was more circumspect. It rec-

ognised that the gold was impossible to trace, that sanctions against the Swiss would backfire — the Allies also needed Swiss francs — and that the gold's owners would be almost impossible to trace later.

So it turned out. The Swiss, who heeded allied warnings only late in the war, denied at their first encounter with postwar negotiators that they held any looted gold. The lie was quickly detected. But when the miserly payment of 250 million Swiss francs was agreed, they were left with approximately seven-eights of the Nazis' gold still in their vaults.

For the past 50 years, various groups have attempted to appeal to the Swiss conscience. Such a commodity appears to be in short supply in Zurich. The arbiters of Swiss banking secrecy rebuffed all attempts by survivors, Jewish groups and American congressional committees to reveal the full extent of their wartime gains. But repeated accusations that the Swiss have been laundering the money of crooks, drug-dealers and dictators as well as the Nazis have begun to have effect. Banking secrecy is not the steel door that it once was. The Swiss have accepted that their banks have no business living off the proceeds of crime, and in many cases now co-operate with international investigators.

That makes it all the more worrying that they have refused to open all the files on their wartime dealings. Repaying today's full value of the presumed gold holdings would indeed be very expensive. But if Switzerland, slowly inching out of its self-imposed international isolation, really wants to make amends for its ambiguous wartime behaviour, it should give free rein to the new commission of experts who will look into the dealings with Nazi Germany. Britain, as a member of the Tripartite Gold Commission, has a residual responsibility here. Mr Rifkind's talks with Flavio Cotti, his opposite number, would carry more weight if the Foreign Secretary could also announce that the British Government had found an appropriate home for its own holdings of Nazi gold forthwith.

Merits of the whole operation apart, there is surely something almost comic about the UK, with its long record of vetoing any and all EU votes whenever HMG feels its national interests are at stake, huffing and puffing when France adopts a similar stance.

Yours etc,
FREDERIC BENNETT,
Plas Cwmllodog,
Aberangell,
Nr Machynlleth, Powys.
September 9.

Britain and EU at odds on Iraq

From Sir Frederic Bennett

Sir, It is wholly misleading for Malcolm Rifkind to point a finger at M Chirac as the scapegoat for his own failure to achieve a unanimous, or even majority, EU decision in support of Washington's resort to military action against Iraq because of its recent armed incursions into the purported Kurdish "safe area" in the north of that country (report, September 9).

The unpalatable truth is that objections to, and misgivings about, the American response were and are widespread. The UN Security Council, including a majority of the five permanent members, and despite rigorous urgings by the UK, refused to endorse it or even condemn Iraq's action.

There was a similar negative reaction by the Arab League, including those member states which were part of the American-led coalition formed to counter Saddam's invasion of Kuwait — eg. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan.

As Sir Edward Heath has rightly emphasised, there is a general feeling of unease, and a need for elucidation, about the sense and the motivation of the American bombardment of strategic air defence bases in the South of Iraq, as a relevant tactic in seeking to relieve the oppression of Kurds in the North. The inhabitants there have been engaged in an internecine civil war, with one side apparently favouring an accommodation with Baghdad and the other preferring ties with Iran, the other principal *beta noise* of the US.

Merits of the whole operation apart, there is surely something almost comic about the UK, with its long record of vetoing any and all EU votes whenever HMG feels its national interests are at stake, huffing and puffing when France adopts a similar stance.

Yours faithfully,
HARRY ADAM,
41 Pilkington Avenue,
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.
September 10.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Church concerns raised in light of Runcie biography

From Mr Harry Adam

Sir, The speculation over the Prince of Wales' suitability to be Supreme Governor of the Church of England may well be justified (report, leading article and letters, September 10). However the Church of England hierarchy must proceed with the caution of those who live in glass houses, if it chooses to throw stones.

For the past two decades at least Church leaders have failed to provide the vision or leadership to inspire action at parish level, where issues of survival and growth are settled. Their inability to implement the ordination of women without an undignified squabble, and their inept handling of the Church Commissioners' debate and its aftermath, have had a demoralising effect on congregations. A process of fragmentation has begun which will, in the absence of strategic leadership, lead to disintegration.

In this context it is hard to see how a disestablished Church of England, stripped of its privilege, could survive without a critical re-examination of its objectives and subsequent radical reform. Perhaps that is itself the strongest argument for disestablishment.

Yours faithfully,
HARRY ADAM,
41 Pilkington Avenue,
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.
September 10.

From the Chairman of

The Prayer Book Society

Sir, You quote Lord Runcie (September 9) as saying of The Prince of

Wales: "It would help if he loved the Church of England a bit more." Perhaps it would help if the Church was more lovable.

For thirty years or more it has alienated thousands of people who used to sit in its pews by trying to rid itself of the Book of Common Prayer.

The Prince of Wales, when presenting the prizes at the first of our Cranmer Awards in December 1989, said "I believe the Prayer Book is a glorious part of every English speaker's heritage".

I, for one, am grateful to Prince Charles for pointing out that our banalities are no improvement on it and a source of confusion in the present.

In the case of our cherished religious writings, we should leave well alone, especially when it is better than well: when it is great.

Yours faithfully,
C. A. A. KILMISTER,
Chairman,
The Prayer Book Society,
St James Garlickhythe,
Garlick Hill, EC4.
September 9.

problem in the Church of England.

We need some 650 to 700 ordinands each year, but in 1994 just over 200 were recommended for training.

There is clearly a correspondence between these matters.

Able men, and women, will not offer themselves for ordination into an ill-disciplined ministry in a Church that is obsessed with bureaucracy and centralisation and where bishops are wanting too much power.

The Church cannot have it all ways.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD UNDERHILL,
St George's Vicarage,
327 Durham Road,
Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.
September 9.

From Mr Michael De-la-Noy

Sir, Clearly writing with first-hand knowledge, Lord Runcie's former chaplain, the Bishop of St Germans, tells us that Lord Runcie understood his lengthy taped conversations with his biographer were intended for use as "background information and scene-setting".

How is any biographer worth his salt expected to make use of such explosive material, freely given, as "background information"?

There is no conceivable way he could have ignored the material presented to him on a plate.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL DE-LA-NOY,
c/o Jacinta Alexander Associates,
47 Emperor's Gate, SW7.
September 10.

Hospitals and social services under financial strain

From Professor Dame Margaret

Turner Warwick

Sir, Jeremy Lauance's report, "Hospitals warn of second-rate care" (September 2), that the NHS Executive proposes to switch control of funds for specialist advice and treatment at tertiary centres from health authorities to local hospitals is disturbing.

Funding of local secondary-care hospitals through contracts with local authorities is already under extreme financial pressure and so-called "cost improvement" levies have, over the years, largely eliminated any potential surpluses. Current local hospital budgets are thus very unlikely to be able to cover the cost of more specialised treatments when these are not available locally.

The critical question, therefore, is whether sufficient additional funds will be transferred to local hospitals to cover the cost of referrals of patients to tertiary centres. If not, and if these costs have to come from the local hospitals' existing budgets, there will be a very strong incentive for doctors at these hospitals not to seek more specialised help for their patients and for local hospital management not to allow it. Many patients may thus be denied the specialist expert advice and treatments they need.

The implications are even more fundamental, however. Tertiary NHS specialist centres do much more than provide a high-quality and cost-effective service for patients with complex conditions because of their specialised facilities and experience, they also make a very important contribution to the research and development upon which medical advances depend — and upon which the NHS itself increasingly depends — and they play a significant role in the training of both generalist and specialist doctors.

If funding for these centres fails, either for direct or indirect reasons, patients of both today and tomorrow will suffer.

Yours sincerely,
MARGARET TURNER WARWICK
(President, Royal College of
Physicians, 1989-92),
Pynes House,
Thorverton, Exeter, Devon.
September 4.

From the Chair of the
Association of County Councils
and the Chief Executive of Mencap

Sir, We are now approaching the all-important negotiations over the public-spending round. We fear that, once again, community care services will be severely under-funded.

Currently, the Government makes an assumption that all local authority social services departments, regardless of local circumstances, will raise a proportion of their income by charging disabled and older people for care

services like home helps, assistance with bathing and dressing, and attendance at day centres.

At the same time the Government states that local authorities have the discretion to decide whether to charge for these services. Latest figures (1993-94) show 10 per cent of gross expenditure on personal social services was recouped by fees and charges.

We take exception to this. When such assumptions are made local authorities have no discretion: they are, in effect, forced to charge.

Most disabled and older people rely on state benefits. They are now paying twice, through payment of council tax and service charges for services which they desperately need, and there is increasing evidence of hardship.

The Coalition on Charging, made up of 24 charities and local authority associations, believes that national government should fund local government in full recognition of jointly shared aspirations for community care, and that the requirement that income is raised through charges should be removed.

Yours etc,
JACK BURY,
Chair, Association of County Councils,
FRED HEDDELL,
Chief Executive, Mencap,
Coalition on Charging,
123 Golden Lane, EC1.
September 10.

Plutonium trade

From Mr Iain Smith, MP for

Blaenau Gwent (Labour)

Sir, I was interested to read your Dipomatic Editor's report (September 3) on a new bilateral pact signed with Japan by the Foreign Secretary during his visit to the Far East.

The Anglo-Japanese "Action Agenda for a Special Partnership" commits both Governments, inter alia, to increasing co-operation on proliferation concerns, including export control policies. This is to be applauded, except that both Governments are also active supporters of nuclear commerce between the countries, including in weapons-usable plutonium, based on major Japanese contracts with the BNFL reprocessing plant at Sellafield.

At a meeting this week in Vienna of

the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the British Government is expected to break ranks with the Americans (contrary to the unique support offered this week over the bombing of Iraq) and support IAEA proposals to reduce the stringent safety standards applied to the air shipment of plutonium. This will make the return of plutonium to Japan cheaper, but more hazardous.

I cannot see how the Foreign Secretary and Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda can reconcile the expansion of commerce in plutonium at the same time as they are backing tougher export control policies to counter proliferation.

Yours sincerely,

IAIN SMITH,
House of Commons.
September 8.

Lollipops at work

From Mrs Carol Hill

Sir, A "left-of-centre think tank" suggests report, early editions, September 2) that persistent car thieves should have to perform the duties of school crossing patrol officers (lollipop ladies/men).

I am a lollipop lady and mother of two and I care about the children who use my crossing to get to school. They trust me to keep them safe. Would their parents have confidence in a teenage joyrider, say, doing the job as a punishment?

Public car-washing, perhaps with wet sponges for victims to throw, would be a more fitting solution.

Yours faithfully,
C. HILL,
1 Pearl Road,
Middleczee, Swindon, Wiltshire.
September 2.

From Mr M. Larkin

Sir, As a retired science teacher who has just launched himself on a new career as a lollipop-man, I was intrigued to see that my local authority contract states that I will be paid at the rate of £3.97667 per hour — a commendable degree of precision in a contractual agreement, of plus or minus half a thousandth of a penny.

I have the honour to remain, Sir,
your obedient servant,
MICHAEL LARKIN,
11A St Osmund's Road,
Poole, Dorset.

September 5.

Tall story

From Mr Keith Chambers

Sir, I can understand Bob Prescott's alarm (letter today) on learning that "the tail of this aircraft is 52 feet above the ground" while on his flight to Manchester. I am similarly alarmed, when flying in America, to be informed that "we shall be in the air momentarily".

Yours faithfully,
KEITH CHAMBERS,
19 Hill Road,
Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire.
September 9.

ALIEN CORN

All argument is against it, but all belief is for it

The British Association yesterday considered BSE, the blues that our prehistoric ancestors played on their flutes of bone and the paranormal. This last may seem an unprofessional topic for a gathering of scientists; but science is concerned with phenomena and no phenomenon should be alien to a scientist.

Indeed, the phenomenal cult popularity of such television programmes as *The X-Files* and such films as *Independence Day* has attracted the attention of a discord of experts. So has the astonishing prevalence of the belief, not only in America, that a person has been abducted by aliens or has seen a UFO. Fox Mulder's office in *The X-Files* is decorated with a fuzzy photograph of a UFO with the paranormal credo "I want to believe". His beautiful sidekick, Dana Scully, always seeks a rational explanation, but by the end of each episode she has to look at Mulder with a wild surmise, and accept the possibility of clandestine alien hokum. Thus yesterday the British Association materialised into the alien world of visitors from outer space, all said to be wearing even stranger things than the anoraks and tweed ties of the scientists' premier division.

Being scientists, they looked for a rational explanation for the irrational. A persuasive paper argued that "sleep paralysis" lies behind accounts of alien abduction and other such happenings. This phenomenon

happens when a person on the cusp of sleep lies semi-conscious and aware, but cannot move. Such people are experiencing the paralysis that normally occurs during dreaming, as a natural safety-belt to prevent us from acting out our dreams. And the beauty of this theory is that it offers a scientific explanation for not just the paranormal obsessions of today, but also for the ghosts of the past. Sleep paralysis might lie behind the medieval incubus which was supposed to have sexual intercourse with women in their sleep, and the succubus which performed a similar office upon men as they slept unable to defend themselves.

For a ghost is the outward and visible sign of an inward fear. Each age and culture finds the contemporary ghosts it needs to embody its fears. Old ghosts carried their heads under their arms or squeaked and gibbered in the Roman streets, wearing Shakespearean sheets. New ghosts are extraterrestrial homunculi, or mysterious flashing lights and ultra-technical sounds.

Sleep paralysis sounds reasonable. But it is a scientific explanation of experiences that are meant to resist science. Ghosts fear no scientific laws, nor do they care for popular applause. So true believers will not be put off by the British Association's rational explanations of their beliefs. They will still be obsessed by what they think they see standing behind the scientists.

Cornwall's pride

From County Councillor Colin Lawry

Sir, Jenny Young (letter, September 9) advises your readers that Gwennap Pit is in Cornwall. Quite correct, it was there when I attended a service last month. However, as a Cornishman, I take exception to the heading you gave to her letter. "Wales: see England".

Like Wales, Cornwall has a proud Celtic tradition, a Brythonic Celtic language which is enjoying something of a revival,

OBITUARIES

HARALD PENROSE

Harald Penrose, OBE, chief test pilot, died on August 31 aged 92. He was born on April 12, 1904.

During his 23 years as chief test pilot for Westland, Harald Penrose flew the company's aircraft from the era of biplanes until the company became Britain's only helicopter manufacturer in the postwar period. Thereafter he concentrated his energies on Westland's sales operations worldwide. Over the years, Penrose flew more than 400 different types of aircraft — fighters, bombers, transports, seaplanes, autogiros and helicopters.

Although born in Reading, Harald Penrose was descended from the Penroses of Portleven, Cornwall. He first took to the air at the age of 11 beneath one of Samuel Cody's man-lifting kites. This fired him with an urge to fly which was further stimulated by a joyride in an Avro 504K war surplus biplane with the pioneer Sir Alan Cobham. By then he had started writing and sailing in his spare time and had designed and built his own glider.

Later he graduated in aeronautical engineering from Northampton Engineering College. After six months as a student aerodynamicist at Handley Page, in 1925 Penrose joined Westland Aircraft Works at Yeovil and was involved in work on the Wapiti military biplane and the revolutionary tailless Pierodactyl.

In 1927 he joined the Royal Air Force Reserve and learned to fly. In 1928, as the manager of Westland's civil aircraft department, he was responsible for the demonstration, sales and delivery of the Widgeon, the two-seat light biplane which was the Westland equivalent of the popular DH Moth of the late 1920s.

When, in April 1931, a British Empire Exhibition was mounted in Buenos Aires, Penrose demonstrated a Wapiti to the South American market as both a land and floatplane.

On his return he was promoted to succeed Westland's chief test pilot, Louis Page, who had been seriously injured in a flying accident. Thus started a remarkable



career as one of Britain's leading civil test pilots. Throughout 25 years he forged a link between the days of "scat of the pants" flying — without radio or modern aids — and the era of jet aircraft and sophisticated avionics.

In 1932 he was given the task of testing two special — but still open cockpit — Westland biplanes, which were to make the first attempt to fly over Mount Everest. In 1933 Penrose climbed both aircraft to more than 38,000 feet over Poole Bay.

Thanks to these tests, in April 1933 both aircraft were successfully flown over Everest by David MacIntyre and the Marquis of Clydesdale.

returning with a series of remarkable photographs of the peak. A year later Penrose set a world height record for a diesel-engine aircraft when he flew a Wapiti to 27,483 feet.

Penrose survived many hair-raising accidents over the next few years. In 1934 a prototype Westland PV-7 torpedo-bomber monoplane broke up in the air during a terminal velocity dive. After a desperate struggle to extricate himself, Penrose left the wingless tumbling fuselage by parachute while the wreckage spread itself over an area of more than seven square miles.

Later, just before the war, he was involved in testing the prototype Westland Whirlwind twin-engine fighter, which was intended as a long range escort, intruder and fighter-bomber. But the Whirlwind was not a success and was withdrawn from service in 1941 after only a few RAF squadrons had been equipped with it. Penrose also test-flew the much larger, but no more successful, pressurised Welkin high-altitude fighter.

Penrose's good luck held through major test-flying hazards, including the difficult flight testing of the Wyvern naval strike-fighter. Penrose made its initial test flight and continued through its development — a flying programme which killed six pilots through the problems of a complex

wind tunnel.

Between 1966 and 1980, Penrose had completed a five-volume history of British aviation, its products, its people and its problems. This work, which covered the 36 years from 1903 to 1939 (written largely from the weekly contemporary accounts in *The Aeroplane* and *Flight* and garnished with first-hand experience), will remain the definitive story of those pioneer years of a new industry.

He followed it in 1980 with a meticulously researched history of British air transport from 1910 to 1979, *Wings Across The World*.

Penrose married in 1929. His wife Norma died in 1986. Their son and daughter survive him.

DAVID GRESHAM

David Gresham, MBE, former director of personnel for British Petroleum, died on August 15 aged 71. He was born on November 18, 1924.

DAVID GRESHAM enjoyed a successful career with British Petroleum, rising from clerical assistant to managing director of the tanker division and then director of personnel. But, retiring early, because of ill-health, he will

perhaps be best remembered for his work as the founder of the Abbeyfield North Downs Extra Care Society, an organisation for the elderly and frail in need of 24-hour nursing.

The first intimation of David Foster Gresham's guiding principle — that a caring attitude for others is essential for social stability — manifested itself during his Army service as a young officer in the Royal Signals in 1943.

His service in France and Belgium culminated in opening up communications in the newly-liberated Antwerp, which was to become an important port of supply for the Allied forces. Gresham lost several of his men in repeated rocket attacks upon the port.

Demobilised in 1947, Gresham embarked on a degree course at Southampton University but failed to finish it. Six years away from academic studies had taken their toll. Instead, realising the importance of oil as a commodity in the postwar world, he obtained a job as a clerical assistant in what was then the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, now known as British Petroleum. His abilities were quickly recognised and he soon rose through the ranks.

In 1967 Gresham was entrusted with ensuring that BP customers all over the world were kept supplied with oil, even though the Suez Canal was closed and tankers then had to make a long journey around the Cape. Gresham worked more than 18 hours a

day at this time, but his efforts and efficiency were recognised and in 1972 he was appointed managing director of BP Tankers.

At that time he knew little of maritime matters. Getting to know individuals at all levels of BP's marine arm, he sought their advice as well as taking several voyages on tankers in an attempt to understand where problems might lie.

He was promoted again in 1975 to be director of personnel for the entire BP Group. But three years later he suffered a heart attack and opted for early retirement.

His managerial skills, however, were not to be wasted. Gresham joined the Abbeyfield movement, committed to the care of the elderly. He became chairman of the Abbeyfield home in Oxted. But it was with those who needed extra care that he came to concern himself.

Despite the onset of Parkinson's disease in 1980, Gresham set up the North Downs Extra Care Society with the objective of building a 22-bed house for the frail and elderly who needed assistance at all times of day. This house has now been in existence for ten years and is named after David Gresham. In 1995 he was appointed MBE.

Gresham's wife, Millie, worked alongside him at the North Downs home. He is survived by her and by two sons.

DIMMIE FLEMING

Dimmie Fleming, bridge player, died on September 5 aged 85. She was born on October 27, 1910.



IN THE summer of 1953 Dimmie Fleming became the first woman bridge player to represent Britain in an open team event. She was always to remember the match. Restless with nerves the night before, she dreamt that her partner, Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, bid a grand slam on the first hand. The actual chances of doing this would have been extremely slight. But the next day, when they sat down to play, Swinnerton-Dyer did indeed on his opening hand bid to a grand slam in clubs and, furthermore, made it. But, in apprehensive error perhaps, he had inadvertently dealt the hand in an anti-clockwise direction and he and Dimmie were replaced by their disgruntled team captain.

Nonetheless, Dimmie Fleming's skill at bridge was undoubtedly. She was a grandmaster of the game. Partnering Frizzi Gordon, she was part of the winning British team in European championships held in Dublin in 1951, in Venice in 1952 and in Palermo in 1959. In 1964 she won the gold medal in world championships held in New York. She also won a host of national competitions, many of them time and time again, including the Gold Cup, Crockfords, the Portland Cup and the Whitelaw Cup.

The Fleming board — a card-holding device used in bridge matches so that competitors can play duplicate hands — was invented by and named after Dimmie Fleming.

Dimmie Fleming was born Phyllis Irene Hill in Tunbridge Wells. As the daughter of the headmaster of Eversley Boys Preparatory School she was first educated at her father's school where she was nicknamed "Jimmy" by her male classmates. It was there,

among the boys, that she first experimented with smoking, a habit she was never to adopt, and learn to play auction bridge, a game which was to become a passion.

At the age of nine, however, she was sent to a girls' school. There her closest schoolfriend, later to become her regular bridge partner, changed his nickname to "Dimmie". This was the name which was to stick for the rest of her life, though it was in no way intended to reflect her academic abilities. She excelled in her schoolwork and was offered a place at Cambridge University at the age of 16. Too young to go up, she briefly attended secretarial college before finding a job in a stockbroking firm. In the end she never got around to attending university.

For several years Dimmie forgot about bridge and it was not until she was 19 and recovering from an appendix operation that her interest was reawakened by a fellow patient. But once her enthusiasm had been re-awakened she took up tournament bridge seriously, marrying in 1934 Arthur Fleming, a West Kent bridge player 19 years her senior, and forming a strong bridge playing partnership with her former classmate Dorothy Pearson. Together, just before the outbreak of

VAGN HOLMBOE

Vagn Holmboe, Danish composer, died on September 1 in Ramsgate aged 86. He was born on December 20, 1909.

VAGN HOLMBOE was the most significant Danish composer in the generation after Nielsen. A quiet, unpretentious and rather ascetic man, he composed prolifically, writing more than 350 works, among them 13 numbered symphonies, nearly 30 concertante works for one or more soloists, 21 numbered string quartets, two operas, a ballet and a plethora of vocal and choral works.

His large-scale orchestral works establish him as a symphonist of international standing, while his contribution to the medium of the string quartet might almost stand comparison with that of Shostakovich. His works for the human voice demonstrate the breadth of his interests, ranging from songs in Japanese and Inuit to a series of *a capella* Latin motets. He also worked for several years as a music critic for the leading Copenhagen daily, *Politiken*, and was an author whose publications included a study of *Danish Street Cries* (1988) and collections of essays on philosophy and aesthetics.

Uncompromising in the pursuit of his own ideas, Holmboe was unmoved by fashion and never subscribed to any passing avant-garde. Instead, in a career of remarkable continuity, he absorbed and assimilated such varied influences as the sophisticated nationalism of Nielsen, the neo-classicism of Stravinsky and Hindemith, and the folk music of Scandinavia and eastern Europe.

He was a master of polyphony, adept at weaving long flowing lines into complex yet transparent textures. From the 1950s onwards he began to develop the distinctive technique he described as metamorphosis, whereby a small group of notes forms a musical germ, a tiny pattern or motif from which, in a process of constant transformation, a whole work grows.

The sense of organic growth, of music as something living and constantly evolving, is central to Holmboe's work.



from Ernst Toch. It was there that he met his future wife, the Romanian pianist, Meta May Graf, a pupil of Hindemith; the couple were married on a field trip to study folk music in Transylvania in 1933.

Returning to Copenhagen in 1934, Holmboe supported himself with work as a teacher and critic. His breakthrough as a composer came in 1939, when his Second Symphony — he had already written more than a hundred works — won a pan-Scandinavian competition organised by the Royal Danish Orchestra. With the prize money the Holmboes bought a plot of land near Ramsele and Lake Arre, about 30 miles from Copenhagen: there they built a house and planted thousands of trees. Nearly all Holmboe's work responds, however obliquely, to the wild Nordic landscape in which he lived.

After ten years of teaching music at the Copenhagen Institute for the Blind, Holmboe moved to the Royal Conservatory in 1950, becoming professor of theory and composition there in 1955. Until 1965, when he resigned his post to concentrate full-time on composing, he was one of Scandinavia's most important teachers, and his pupils included such successful Danish composers as Per Nordgråd and Arne Nordheim.

Despite the protracted illness he suffered in later years, Holmboe was composing until the very end. His towering, valedictory Symphony No 13 was premiered in Copenhagen in March. In August a new work for soprano and organ was performed, and at the time of his death he was working on another string quartet.

Vagn Holmboe is survived by his wife, to whom he was married for 63 years, and by a son and a daughter.

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Programme makers cater to nostalgia for a lost world

Cooking for kitchen voyeurs

Mmm" "Ooooh" "Whew" "Wonderful! Wonderful!" The orgastic squeals and moans issuing from Loyd Grossman and company on BBC1 on Sunday would have done for Channel 4 after midnight. But they passed muster as feature fare, for the stimulants were merely the *Junior Masterchef's* scallop-stuffed ravioli and caramelised pear tart with mulled-wine ice cream.

It's not the sensuous presentation of food on television that makes me squirm. Rather, it's the pretence that viewers are watching for culinary instruction. The shows are daytime pornography. All these gorgeous televised goodies are being consumed by a nation of voyeurs: people who get their gustatory kicks from watching other people cook but don't actually do it themselves.

There are exceptions, of course. I myself have occasionally been tempted to try pounding rosemary, garlic and anchovies into the smooth paste as seen on the screen. But the audience before whom these demonstrations are performed consists in no small part of students in bedsits, pensioners and unemployed men. They would no more try *Rachel's Ravishing Mushroom Tart* at home than they would try to make binoculars out of toilet rolls.

How come? Nostalgia. Hunger for a lost world, a golden age of home-peeled spuds and hand-wringing chickens. Sitting there alone with a bag of crisps watching *Simply Delicious with Family and Friends* (this series starts on Carlton tomorrow with potatoes) is as sentimental an exercise as watching *Sense and Sensibility*.

That people are not eating family meals any more bodes ill for the future of the sitcom. The table is centrepiece of the old family comedy: the place where all the characters interact. The teenagers rebel, the mother (who is also the cook) cajoles, the father lays down the law and looks a buffoon. This tradition, going back to the days of Andy Hardy films and *I Love Lucy*, is being kept alive, as I have pointed out before, by that deeply moral cartoon strip, *The Simpsons*. The Simpsons eat together — two courses, if memory serves: dessert is part of the ritual of the old American way of life.

As a dramatic focal point, the dining table is hard to beat. As *The Last Supper* demonstrates, it gets all the principal players in the same tight shot. But it is hard to find characters in today's realistic soap operas eating together round the same board. These people snack rather than eat. Accordingly, the dramatist resorts to the diner, the cafe counter and the pub to bring them together. The French learnt that long ago.

and to show that, like the earlier counterparts, they do occasionally need to eat.

Australian soaps make a lot of the kitchen — characters in *Neighbours* and *Home and Away* seem always to be opening the fridge, but only as an activity incidental to talking about relationships. Consumption tends to take place either standing up in coffee bars.

Yet even though modern Britain consumes its food in haste and in solitude, the television time devoted to its preparation continues to increase. Last week, Carlton Television launched a cable network devoted entirely to food. The advantages to the makers of such programmes is obvious. They are cheap, fill those omnivorous hours in the daytime schedule and offer extra income, for broadcaster and presenter alike, from the sale of magazines and cookbooks.

It's all hard on the viewers, though, tempted by these mountains of glorious food, then, if they watch ITV, to sign up for Weight Watchers or buy some low-calorie product. This conflict between the unreality of the cookery programmes and the fast-food realism of the soap operas can have only one result: guilt. Step forward Janice Robinson, with *The Food Chain*. This new BBC2 series finds us all guilty. For wanting processed food and for not asking enough about how it gets to us. Robinson even got a grim-faced expert last week to say that as a result, we are worse fed as a nation than during the Great Depression.

At best, this new puritanism is pointless. Thanks to the BSE crisis, we are all too aware of the contents of the tasty pie and burger. At worst, the sermon is misleading. The growth and distribution of food is one of the areas of life where there has been genuine progress.

What we need is not more antifood propaganda but more reminders of the joys of convenience food. We need to teach the young that, rather than stuffing themselves on crisps, they should microwave some *pasta arrabbiata* instead. The new gallivanting gourmet should be a single parent or a working mother, who will remind those who don't know what women had to do in the past to put three meals a day on the table. She should also say a good word for mass-production, and recall the not-distant days when the most common association with the word "chicken" was not "battery-reared" but "Sunday". As for the disappearance of the mealtime, eating out has never been cheaper. There is no more binding experience for family than to dine out together. The French learnt that long ago.



BRENDA MADDOX

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Spin-doctors and the credibility gap

Although I have never been known as a sensitive plant, I must confess to some distress at being called a spin-doctor — or, more properly, an ex-spin-doctor. This is not because it is now a term of abuse. Anyone who has been called a sewer — as I was by John Biffen who carefully distinguished me from the sewage I was supposed to carry — tends to find that much that is subsequently thrown at them is relatively complimentary.

I am distressed because I have never practised as a spin-doctor and never regarded myself as one. I therefore feel I owe it to my former colleagues in the Government Information Service (GIS), which I led for a couple of years, and responsible PRs in the wider public relations industry to protect them from guilt by association with this import from North America. I can best do so by defining what is and what is not a spin-doctor.

The 1,200 or so members of the GIS come nowhere near qualifying. Their two prime functions are to promote an informed public, mainly through the press, radio and television, about the Government's policies and measures and to advise ministers and officials on their presentation.

Of course they seek to put the best possible gloss on the works of the Government of the day, consistent with the facts as far as they can be established — and reality. They try to engineer opportunities for their minister to argue the case for his policies and measures and to defend them when under attack.

They also seek to preserve their minister's freedom of manoeuvre by avoiding, if at



At the Edinburgh Television Festival a session was set aside to debate the growing efforts of spin-doctors to influence news reports. Yesterday the Freedom Forum discussed whether spin-doctors were 'Feeding the Press or Starving the Public'. Here, Sir Bernard Ingham, the man Lady Thatcher called "the best press secretary in the world", gives his definition of a spin-doctor

all possible, the premature disclosure of information. But they operate under one overriding constraint: their personal credibility.

Press secretaries, as members of the GIS, have chosen to make a profession out of spokesmanship. Their license to operate is their credibility as reliable informants. It takes years to build up that credibility. It can be destroyed in one careless moment.

They seek at all times to defend their credibility. It is this — their longer term approach to their job — which partly distinguishes them from mere spin-doctors.

But they are also set apart, even from private sector public relations, by being precluded from promoting their minister's image and political fortunes. They have, of course, to take account of their minister's strengths and weaknesses for these can get in the way of conveying the message.

For example, I could never

ignore Margaret Thatcher's remarkable ability to appear hard and uncaring in advising her how to present a case. But I was not there to destroy her Iron Lady image. I may well have enhanced it by the confidence with which I represented her position. But that was not the objective of the exercise. My briefing reflected the reality of her constancy and strength of purpose. She lost or gained incidentally.

All political parties have long accepted that good presentation by the official machine may bring the Government a political bonus. But opposition parties will only continue to sequester in it if they are satisfied that it arises incidentally from the work of civil servants paid by the taxpayer.

The third distinguishing feature between the GIS and spin-doctors is their role in fashioning policy. They have, of course, to take account of their minister's strengths and weaknesses for these can get in the way of conveying the message.

They seek at all times to defend their credibility. It is this — their longer term approach to their job — which partly distinguishes them from mere spin-doctors.

advertently make policy through their briefings. But they are not primarily there to devise policy.

Spin doctors on the other hand, claim personality, image and policy to be their core businesses. Peter Mandelson MP and a certain Dick Morris, now fallen from White House grace after a much-publicised encounter with a communications background and an inclination to play Svengali. They see politicians and their programmes

with Labour leader Tony Blair and President Clinton.

Indeed, Mr Morris is described as the architect of the new Clinton much as, I suspect, an unblushing Mr Mandelson would claim to be the inspiration behind "New Labour". Spin-doctors are thus partisan, political operators with a communications background and an inclination to play Svengali. They see politicians and their programmes

as "products". They devise marketing campaigns for those products much as they would flog cornflakes or Wonderbras and they measure their success in publicity. How else can you explain the Tories' perseverance with their "demon eyes" advertising?

On the evidence provided by Mr Morris, spin-doctors also believe that they can turn water into wine. Who else would have had the gall to

work on Bill Clinton? Who else — Mr Blair apart — would have had Mr Mandelson's temerity to refashion the old socialist, profligate Labour Party after Maggie's financially prudent, enterprise Tories? This is not a trade for modest, sensitive men.

Nor do they have much to do with political philosophy. In fact, the fewer a political leader's beliefs, the more he needs a spin-doctor to make

up for his deficiency — and the greater the spin-doctor's opportunity since his principal brings little baggage to the party. We thus see that spin-doctors have little in common with self-effacing GIS press secretaries. They seek to create a new reality while press officers cope with the here and now. They reflect the prevailing dearth of ideology.

They are perhaps an index of political poverty.



Labour leader Tony Blair with spin-doctor Peter Mandelson, MP. Spin doctors claim personality, image and policy are their core business

Jennai Cox asks why feminine competition is excluded from media sports coverage and finds that male attitudes are to blame

Why women don't make the back page

as under-represented as they are in the sports pages and nowhere are women so systematically thrust into feminine, sexual roles."

Even during the Atlanta games there was an attempt, she says, to trivialise female sports. "There were a lot of

gymnasts and swimmers wearing leotards and swimsuits, but very little coverage of team games."

Professor Margaret Talbot, head of sport at Leeds Metropolitan University, claims the portrayal of women's sport has long been conditional on

them looking like girls. "There seems to be an unease about seeing women achieving and striving. Women are expected to conform to a strong feminine stereotype," she said.

Swimmers fall within acceptable female behaviour.

Ms Burton Nelson believes most women ignore newspaper sport thinking it is not important. They are mistaken, she says, and need to be aware that "men feel threatened that women's performance in sport is improving".

In the last century there were concerted attempts by the establishment to stop women playing sports. The *Birmingham Daily Mail* in 1888 described women's cricket as "essentially a male game" which "can never be played properly in petticoats" and pleaded with them not to enter this "insane physical rivalry with men". These days, says Ms Burton Nelson, the coverage is controlled, instead.

Television commentators and newspaper sports editors in America are still predominantly men who favour the sports in which males dominate — just eight per cent of

coverage is of women's sports. The situation is similar here. ITV and Channel 4 broadcast mainly horse racing, American football, rugby, boxing and motor racing; most BBC sport is male-dominated and while satellite channels have greater variety the flagship programme on Sky Sport is Premiership football.

Fewer women write about sports than any other popular media subject, despite quite recently showing more interest in sports journalism. "Men can no longer say sport is masculine. Millions of girls are playing, coaching and a lot are now writing about it," says Ms Burton Nelson. She quotes Kate Callen, a former sports editor, who thinks because they are not dazzled by the stars, women can make better sports writers.

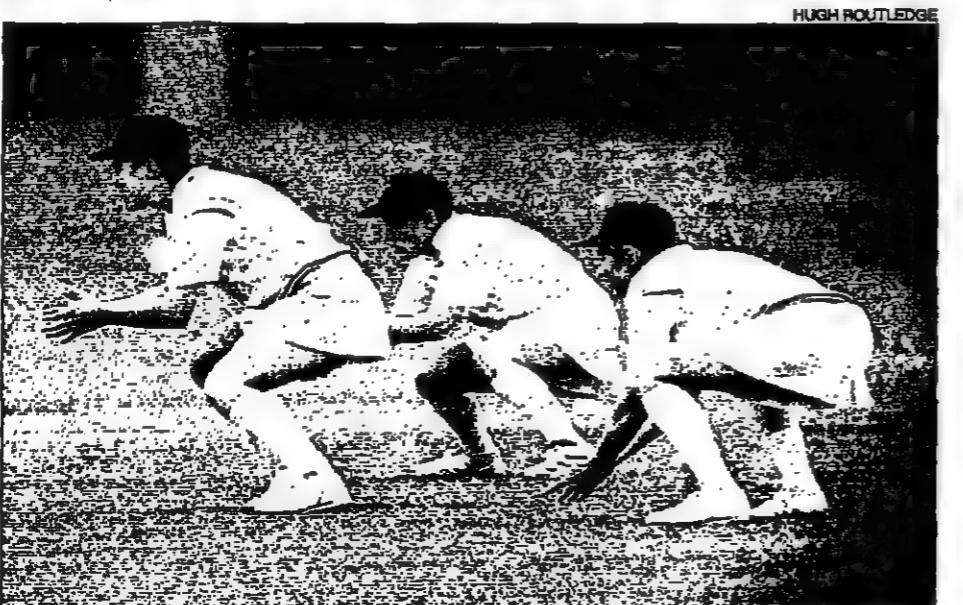
The sports editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, Colin Gibson, also said female sports reporters may be known as "fluffies", but because of their isolation from the pack they learn to develop their own style. Steve Pinder, a sports journalism lecturer at

City University, agrees. "Each year more women choose the sports specialist. They bring a fresh eye to the subject whereas the men tend to have set ideas," he says.

During television and radio phone-ins to promote another of her books about the achievements of female athletes, Ms Burton Nelson was constantly told by men: "Yes, but a woman will never play pro football." As more women

play "male sports" she believes they might.

An estimated 20,000 women play football in the UK and a recent international game against Portugal drew an audience of 2,000, many of whom were men, according to the Football Association. William Hill has taken bets from mothers on their daughters playing for England and it is not inconceivable, says Graham Sharpe of the bookmakers, that a women's FA Cup final will one day pack Wembley. That will give everyone something to read in the sports pages.



Ladies' cricket thrives but they were told in 1881 "end this insane rivalry with men"

Authors outdo reporters in newspaper circulation war

also covered on the influential *Today* radio programme and the main BBC and ITN television news bulletins.

September is the month when newspapers are looking to serialisations to get readers back into the newspaper habit after their summer holidays. It is also the month when Britain's publishers launch the battle for the Christmas bestseller lists. More books are published between September and November — and more sold — than in the rest of the year.

Editors are bombarded throughout the year with proposals for serialisations from publishers. Some, notably *The Sunday Times* and the *Daily Mail*, are looking for serialisations almost every week of the year. Others concentrate on autumn, January and April, when sales need a kick start and a sensational serial helps.

Selecting serials demands

nice choices both by editors and publishers. Publishers have two ambitions: One is to recoup a significant portion of the advances they have paid to authors. The second is to sell a serialisation to the newspaper which offers the most suitable environment for their author, his subject and potential readers. Robert Runcie would usually be as unsuitable for *The Sun* as the memoirs of Samantha Fox would be for *The Times*.

The teasing question for editors is: will a book on offer for serial genuinely boost sales or simply keep readers happy with a good read? Is it

worth £5,000, £25,000, £50,000 — or are Sarah Duchess of York's memoirs, due this autumn, worth £500,000? Add another half a million to that for advertising on television and the Duchess has to sell a lot of newspapers to make such an investment worthwhile. Yet rivalries in Fleet Street are so fierce that a bill for £1 million may be considered cheap if it persuades readers to switch papers, particularly if some are persuaded to stick with their new choice.

Some of this autumn's early choices have been up for inspection in the past two weeks — Joan Collins in the *Sunday Express* and *Daily Express*; *The Last Days of the Romanovs* and *The Oprah Winfrey Diaries* in the *Daily Mail*; Buddy Holly in the *Sunday Times*; drug dealer Howard Marks and Tony Blair in *The Guardian*, as well as Robert Runcie and Emma Nicholson.

Still to come are Sarah Duchess of York; the story of Rachael Nickell (and father of their child) who was murdered on Wimbledon Common in 1992; and, cashing in on the success of the Nicholas Evans novel, Monty Roberts' story of his work as horse whisperer to the Queen. After being rejected by several major players, it looks as though *An Evil Love*, Geoffrey Wansell's life of Frederick West, so horrifying that most newspapers would not even consider a serialisation, has found a Sunday buyer.

Without the book industry, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, news editors would often be looking at empty pages. It is a good deal for both parties. Newspapers get good stories and access to star names for interviews and profiles — and the publishers get loads of free publicity to sell their books. They are so lucky they often forget to advertise them in the papers that give them so much help.

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Graham seeks a
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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1996

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Fraudster tries to recruit SFO chief for Nigerian scam

BY JON ASHWORTH

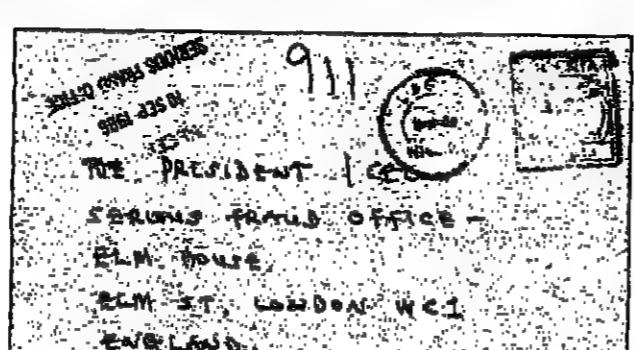
IT WAS just another fraudulent letter scam. The author was from out of town, he had \$32 million to place in a UK bank account, and he needed the help of a trustworthy person employed by a reputable company. Nothing could be simpler — except that the recipient was George Staple, and the "company" was the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

The Director of the SFO is not, perhaps, the most logical person to target for a fraudulent scheme. But so it unfolded yesterday, when a letter addressed to the "President/CEO" and carrying a Lagos postmark, arrived at the SFO's Elm House headquarters. Mr Staple was none

too impressed with what Dr Oludare Wilson of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation had to say.

The story will be familiar enough to the thousands of people to have encountered this well-worn format over the years. Dr Wilson — unscrupulous chaps that he is — had overflated a \$665 million engineering and construction contract and was eager to transfer \$32 million into a safe and reliable offshore account. None safer than Mr Staple's, one would agree.

In time-honoured fashion, Dr Wilson goes on to offer the SFO a cut of 30 per cent — about \$9.6 million — in return for its help. He goes on to



The letter addressed to the "President" of the SFO, and George Staple, the Director

recount the unhappy tale of an earlier deal that went wrong, costing him and his partners \$27.5 million. He adds: "This time around we need a more reliable and trustworthy person, and a reputable compa-

nny's account to transfer this money into. Hence this letter to you."

Dr Wilson concludes by asking Mr Staple to keep the proposed deal "top secret and confidential", since "top and

influential government functionaries" are involved. The transaction, needless to say, is "100 per cent risk free."

Mr Staple, a former partner in Clifford Chance, the City law firm, promptly referred

the matter to an interested party — the Metropolitan Police Fraud Squad. The Met is said to have received at least 18,000 complaints about Nigerian letter frauds, and has reputedly made about 45 arrests. It is thought that at least \$39 million has been swindled from recipients who were rash enough to take up the offer.

Five men were sentenced to various terms in prison in January for their part in a Nigerian-based "fax" fraud, which involved 400 victims in 60 countries. Metropolitan Police officers recovered £280,000, in a raid on three premises in central London. In May, two brothers were jailed for their part in a Lagos-based ring. Fraudsters are thought to employ UK-based operatives

who literally page through telephone directories, plucking names and addresses at random. Presumably, the words "Serious Fraud Office" were innocuous enough not to trigger alarm.

Victims who swallow the bait are induced to pay money up front in "consultancy fees" and "local taxes" to facilitate transfer of the funds. Needless to say, the transfer never takes place. One businessman claims to have lost \$6 million to "advance fee" fraud.

Mr Staple, for his part, was treating yesterday's incident as all in a day's work. He said: "They targeted the wrong person for their mailshot. I hope those who received similar letters will not be foolish enough to get involved."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	3916.1	(+5.3)
Yield	4.0%	
FSE 100 All share	1936.02	(+3.35)
Nikkei	2059.59	(+37.32)
New York		
Dow Jones	5729.77	(-4.07)
S&P Composite	664.07	(-0.31)

US RATE

Federal Funds	8.75%	(8.75%)
Long Bond	8.50%	(8.50%)
Yield	7.11%	(7.07%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	10.00%	(10.00%)
1-month gilts future (Dec)	108.50	(108.50)

STERLING

New York	1.5690*	(1.5572)
London	1.5687	(1.5600)
DM	2.3474	(2.3271)
FR	8.0082	(7.9462)
SP	1.8197	(1.8876)
Yen	171.07	(170.19)
£ Index	98.1	(98.6)

US DOLLAR

London	1.5600*	(1.4965)
DM	5.1807*	(5.1120)
FR	1.2330	(1.2227)
Yen	109.50	(109.25)
£ Index	97.1	(98.5)

YEN

Tokyo close	Yen 108.28	
London close	8382.48 (\$389.50)	

Utility review

Richard Caborn, the Shadow Minister for competitiveness and a regulation specialist, yesterday told a fringe meeting at the Trades Union Congress that the party plans a review of the utilities pricing formulae, and seeks moves to make the regulators more publicly and politically accountable. Page 26

Textiles jobs

Courtalids Textiles, a supplier to Marks & Spencer, is to shift more production abroad and will cut 1,500 British jobs over the next two years. Page 27. Tempos 28

M&G deal urged on Kepit investors

BY ANNE ASHWORTH

THE board of the beleaguered Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation Trust (Kepit) has written to its 70,000 investors informing them that their interests would be best served in a joint deal with M&G, the unit trust group.

However, the announcement immediately prompted a row between Kepit and Henderson Touche Remnant, the fund management group, whose TR European Growth (Treg) unit trust is bidding £500 million for Kepit.

Treg claimed that the M&G arrangement did not properly cater for the needs of the bulk of Kepit's disaffected investors who wanted cash.

The scandal at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, whose European trusts are now the centre of an investigation that could lead to big upheaval for the trust industry, has added further confusion to the complex arguments over Kepit's fate. But Shane Ross, Kepit's chairman, denied that the events at Morgan Grenfell had in any way influenced his choice of a partner.

Mr Ross is recommending a scheme proposed by M&G under which investors could choose either to hold units in a new Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation unit trust, switch into M&G's European & General unit trust, or take cash by moving into Kleinwort's Money Trust and then liquidating their holdings.

Mr Ross said that M&G's stratagem was the most attractive of the ten proposals submitted by fund management groups. He was also highly critical of the Treg's £500 million bid that inspired the approaches from other suitors, including Barings, Flemings, Guinness Flight, Invesco



Eric Paterson, the chief executive of National Express, yesterday announced plans to bid for all remaining rail franchises. Story, page 26

Alcopops hangover for Matthew Clark

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE craze for "alcopop" drinks is destroying sales of cider, Matthew Clark, the drinks company, revealed yesterday. Shares in the company slumped by more than a third to close 239p at 431p, wiping more than £210 million off the company's market value.

Peter Aikens, chief executive, said that sales of Matthew Clark's premium branded products, which include Diamond White and "K" ciders and Babybream, had fallen by 60 per cent during July and August. Sales in the company's branded division fell by 40 per cent overall. The company's premium brand ciders account for around 18 per cent of total group profits.

Matthew Clark added that its profits had also been hit, although to a lesser degree, by cheap cider products which have continued to take up most of the market growth, imposing pricing pressure on premium brands.

The company said it would rethink its marketing strategy to deal with the threat posed by alcopops, but did not want to make a knee-jerk response to the problem.

Pennington, page 27

PPI creditors to receive surety money

BY JON ASHWORTH

CREDITORS of Polly Peck International are to receive £2.6 million lodged as surety for Asil Nadir, the fugitive businessman, after a judge ruled that the funds should not be forfeited to the Crown.

Sir Lawrence Verney, the Recorder of London, was asked at the Old Bailey by Roy Amotz QC, acting for PPI's joint administrator, not to order forfeiture of the £2 million security left behind when Mr Nadir jumped bail in May 1993. The result means that the sum — plus an estimated £600,000 in interest — is available to creditors.

Christopher Morris of Deloitte & Touche, joint administrator of PPI, had challenged the application by the Crown. Mr Morris said: "I am delighted with the result as this will increase the amount of money available to creditors." The extra funds will not have a significant impact on creditors, who are owed about £1.8 billion.

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Going for growth: Steve Murfin, left, finance director, and Brian Evans, chief executive, saw pre-tax profits at Wyevale Garden Centres rise 22 per cent to £5.8 million in the six months to June 30. Earnings rose 19.8 per cent to 10.4p a share. The interim dividend rises 15 per cent to 3.7p a share

National to go all-out on rail bids

By FRASER NELSON

NATIONAL EXPRESS, the transport group, said yesterday that it would bid for all of the unsold rail franchises.

The group, whose acquisition of the Midlands Main Line has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, said that it had decided not to "pick and choose" between the remaining franchises.

Stagecoach, the UK bus and rail company that runs South West Trains, declared a similar strategy in July.

Colin Child, finance director of National Express, said the group was confident of persuading the MMC that its ownership of both West Midlands Travel, a regional bus operator, and the Midlands train network would not present it with an unfair advantage.

He added: "The overlap between coach and rail passengers is minimal. We see rail's main competition as the car market, and our advertising strategy will be targeting car passengers directly."

Pre-tax profits increased to £20.4 million from £7.79 million on sales of £206 million (£115 million). Earnings jumped from 7.3p to 10.5p per share. An interim dividend of 3.4p (3p) will be paid on October 21.

Although net cash fell to £18.9 million, from £33.7 million, the group said that it was looking to buy more bus companies.

Its two rail operations, Gatwick Express and Midland Main Line, generated a combined operating profit of £401,000 in their first four months with the group. There was a six-month profit contribution of £18.5 million from West Midlands Travel.

Polski Express, its Polish subsidiary, incurred losses of £466,000. National Express may put the service into a joint venture or withdraw completely.

Labour outlines plans to shake up utilities

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR is to propose tighter profit caps for utilities and could share out the windfall tax it intends to levy on the privatised industries on a regional basis.

The clearest picture yet of how a Labour government would tackle utility regulation emerged yesterday when one of the key architects of the policy, soon to be unveiled, outlined current thinking.

Richard Caborn, Labour's spokesman for competitiveness and a regulation specialist, told a fringe meeting at the Trades Union Congress conference that the party plans a review of the pricing formulae and to make the regulators more publicly and politically accountable and could seek to return excess profits clawed back under a windfall tax to

the areas in which companies had made their profits.

Moves to distribute the windfall tax on a regional basis are in their infancy but such an allocation would bolster a Labour reinforcement of regional development. Mr Caborn said: "Why shouldn't it be that where the money has been generated it then finds its way back?" Regional distribution of the tax, which is expected to raise at least £3 billion, could help to fund training and youth employment schemes. Tax raised from a levy on the electricity generators and possibly British Gas, which do not have a regional base, would be distributed nationally.

Mr Caborn stressed that the party would take harsh profit caps, run in tandem with

tighter corporate governance. The pricing formula of retail price inflation minus X, conceived by Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, is likely to be discarded in favour of profit-sharing.

Mr Caborn said Margaret Beckett, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, was looking at profit-sharing programmes to curb the companies' ability to pass cost savings made under RPI-X straight on to shareholders. He said: "RPI-X has largely failed in stopping benefit going directly to shareholders."

Foreign ownership of UK utilities is also likely to come under scrutiny and Labour could insist on domestic companies having a separate listing on the Stock Exchange if they are owned by overseas

businesses. Labour also hopes to strengthen the hand of utilities to compete globally and could endorse vertical integration of the type that was outlawed by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, when he vetoed bids by National Power and PowerGen for two regional electricity companies.

Mr Caborn described the decision by Mr Lang to bar National Power from buying Southern Electric and PowerGen from buying Midlands Electricity as a "narrow view".

He said: "UK companies must be empowered to compete effectively overseas. He said they could be suffering from too small a home base to nurture the expertise needed."

TUC reports, page 2

RJB confirms plan for £300m colliery

By OLIVER AUGUST



Rowell: profits up

RJB Mining, the company that bought most of British Coal's mines, yesterday confirmed that it has submitted proposals for a new colliery in the Witham district, north of Newark, Nottinghamshire.

This is the first new pit development in England since 1981 and the largest since the coal bonanza in Yorkshire's Selby coalfield 20 years ago. The coalfield is likely to contain 655 million tonnes and will take ten to 15 years to come into full production.

About a third of the reserves vary in depth from 600 to 900 metres and extraction would be at the rate of three million tonnes a year, creating 500 jobs. Development is expected to cost £300 million at 1996 prices. Plans for the mine came following the sale of RJB's 50 per cent stake in Belgrave House, Darfield Farm, to the Chinese state-owned coal company, China Coal Group. RJB said that any creditor of the company may at any time require the 50 per cent stake following the sale. The company will be entitled to receive information about, or be entitled to receive the proceeds of, the preparation of the statement of affairs and concerning the winding up.

A list of the names and addresses of the creditors of the company can be inspected at the offices of Philip Cottle & Co, PO Box 20, 20 Paddington Street, London EC4A 2EP, from 12.00 noon for the purposes permitted for in Section 96 of the Insolvency Act 1986. It is necessary to give notice of the meeting at the meeting of the creditors of the company to be held at the offices of Philip Cottle & Co, 20 Paddington Street, 2nd Floor, London W2 2LS, on 12 September 1996 at 12.00 noon for the purposes permitted for in Section 96 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Philip Cottle & Co, 20 Paddington Street, 2nd Floor, London W2 2LS, on 12 September 1996 at 12.00 noon for the purposes permitted for in Section 96 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Philip Cottle & Co, 20 Paddington Street, 2nd Floor, London W2 2LS, on 12 September 1996 at 12.00 noon for the purposes permitted for in Section 96 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Philip Cottle & Co, 20 Paddington Street, 2nd Floor, London W2 2LS, on 12 September 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□ Williams focuses on focus □ Three-way split for investment trust □ Regan's patient still in intensive care

The leopards change their spots

□ If conglomerate has become a term of abuse, then "acquisition-minded conglomerate" must be the ultimate insult. Which is curious given how many there are still around. The dictionary defines a conglomerate as a group or corporation formed by merging of unrelated firms. Most companies of any age fall within this definition, having evolved over the decades through a curious, quasi-biological process of fission and fusion as deals were done and different businesses were bought and sold.

Some argue, therefore, that the current distaste for conglomerates is more a matter of fashion and perception. They may even point out that no one in the City ever took to task Gerry Robinson, of Granada, or Sir Clive Thompson, at Remitok, for heading groupings that range from *Coronation Street* to motorway cafés or office cleaning to tropical plants until they were involved in takeover bids.

But boards of directors do not sensibly ignore fashion even if the two biggest fashion victims, BTR and Hanson, left it too long. BTR will this week cut its dividend by a third and make much of its plans for disposals; Hanson, from October, becomes four separate companies. There are others that survived, by proving either that they could bring added value to the concept

— difficult, that, given that the City had decided it was irredeemably flawed — or that they were not really a conglomerate after all.

The flim-flam that accompanied this strategy made much of "focus", the corporate buzz-word of the 1990s. This means concentrating on profitable areas, the sort of blindingly obvious insight that management consultants are paid millions to come up with. The focus word will be well to the fore when BTR makes its apology to the City tomorrow, and it was on offer yesterday from Williams.

This is one of the survivors, Sir Nigel Rudd, its chairman, having spotted early the conglomerates brush coming and ducked to avoid most of the tar. The second half, he told the City, will feature "the continuing strength of our fire protection businesses and the increasing sales volume of security products". Limping a poor third, by implication, comes building products and such household names as Rawplugs and Larchlap fencing, Amdega conservatories and Smallbone luxury fitted kitchens.

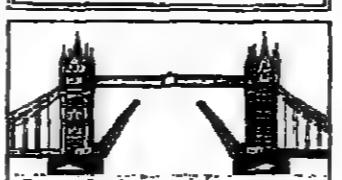
Roger Carr, the chief executive, says Williams is still "hungry for acquisitions" — just as well that he said it. These will be in the two chosen areas: The level of debt, gearing now at 90 per cent, should require matching disposals to fund them. Williams believes that interest covers a better measure of what it can afford, would allow as much as £300 million to be spent before any disposals. These will come eventually, and among those well-known and readily saleable building products.

Thus do the leopards, imperceptibly, change their spots. Expect much more talk of focus as the process continues. And just wait for the tide to change, conglomerates to come back into fashion, and all the leopards' spots to start to fade again.

Kepit in the family

□ INVESTORS in Kepit, or those who are not heartily sick of the whole affair by now, might ponder Hilaire Belloc's lines on an election:

PENNINGTON



"The assured power which stands on Privilege! And goes with Women, and Champagne, and Bridge," he wrote, "and Democracy resumed her reign! (Which goes with Bridge, and Women and Champagne!)

Plus of change, in other words, Kleinwort Benson, whose record with the Kleinwort European Privatisation Investment Trust has been much criticised, has been on a beauty parade in recent weeks. The independent board of directors have been casting around for alternative managers, spurred by a hostile bid from one such, Touche Remnant. They have reached a decision, and the winner is ... Kleinwort Benson, in alliance with another City heavyweight,

the middle of this month, which should contain some idea what other plans were laid before the independent directors.

Not much Spring in the Ram's step

□ THREE years ago, when the institutional shareholders ousted Spring Ram's founder, Bill Rooney, and installed Roger Regan as chairman, Mr Regan said it would take three years to turn around the ailing kitchens and bathrooms group. Well, time's up.

Or they can throw in their luck with M&G, investing in a more widely spread European unit trust and hoping for a better performance from this in future.

Kleinwort would clearly hope they would stay with its own vehicle, which will retain some of the original Kepit securities, and is forecasting a significant upturn for these.

Just two reservations. First,

the attraction of unit trusts has, how should one put it, dimmed over the past fortnight; no fault of Kleinwort but look rather to another German-owned City institution. Secondly, there is no indication what other offers were made. Kleinwort says its scheme is less expensive than Touche Remnant's. But investors should wait on further details towards

at around a quarter of the price they commanded on the day of his appointment.

Yesterday he was being upbeat. July sales showed a slight rise; the takeover of Texas DIY by Homebase had not had too much of an effect. Stag Furniture should be sold by the end of the year; the core businesses of kitchens and bathrooms should break even in the second half; and, if all goes to plan, Spring Ram could make £5 million next year. This compares with the £21 million in the last year of Bill Rooney. And the institutions kicked him out for that.

Replacing Rooney looked at the time like a positive move. But shareholders can be forgiven now for feeling like the Russian voter who looks at Boris Yeltsin and wonders if the Communists weren't so bad after all.

Bitter lemon

□ MATTHEW CLARK has lost a third of its stock market value after a profit warning that blamed the new breed of alcoholic lemonades. Will this become the next catch-all excuse for underperformance by the drinks companies, in the same way that every duff leisure company has blamed the National Lottery? This could be the start of a trend even more invidious than those wretched alcopops themselves.

More jobs to go as Courtaulds Textiles reshapes

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

COURTAULDS TEXTILES, a leading supplier to Marks & Spencer, is to shift more of its production abroad and will cut at least 1,500 UK jobs, equal to 11 per cent of its British workforce, over the next two years.

The company, which yesterday reported it had gone into the red with an interim loss after exceptional of £8.5 million, compared with a profit of £6.4 million a year ago, has sold six businesses in recent

months, and plans to dispose of a further six. So far this year, it has cut more than 700 jobs in the UK.

Colin Dyer, chief executive since June, declined to say which UK factories are now under threat of closure. More

production will be moved to countries with lower labour costs, such as Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey and Sri Lanka. He

said that a minimum wage would accelerate the loss of jobs in the UK textiles sector.

Government figures due out today are expected to show a decline in the number of unemployed in August, but later this month British Airways is widely expected to announce plans to shed around 10,000 jobs, equal to a quarter of its workforce.

Mr Dyer surprised the City yesterday by announcing that restructuring will cost between £30 million and £35 million over the next two years, including £9.1 million charged in the first half of this year. Excluding this charge, Courtaulds made an interim pre-tax profit of £600,000, compared with £10.3 million a year earlier.

Most of the remaining £21 million to £26 million cost of restructuring will be charged in the second half and analysts expect it to wipe out most of the profits for the full year. They were expecting a much lower restructuring charge.

Courtaulds Textiles says it will fund the programme with

cash raised from disposals. Annual benefits are expected to build to between £10 million and £13 million by 1998. In the years after the programme, reorganisation costs are expected to be around £2 million to £3 million per year.

The company's structure has been reorganised into four divisions: lace and stretch fabric, lingerie and hosiery, casualwear and underwear, and furnishings.

Fabrics fared worst in the first half, with profit before interest down £8.2 million, because of weak demand in the US and in continental European lace.

Operating priorities are to resolve the problems in lace and improve margins.

In clothing, profit was similar to last year, excluding reorganisation costs. Order books indicate better second-half sales than a year ago.

Mr Dyer intends to develop sales to the company's biggest buyer, Marks & Spencer. It currently accounts for 28 per cent of its sales. He expects good progress in clothing and stretch fabrics but says lace margins remain a problem.

Earnings per share of 3.1p a year ago turned into losses per share of 3.7p for the six months ended June 30. The company is maintaining its interim dividend at 5.2p. It is payable on October 22. The company's shares closed up 5.2p at 30.1p.

Tempus, page 28



Towards 2000: Parity, the information technology company, expects expenditure on IT to rise sharply as companies make efforts to contend with the so-called millennium factor (Marlin Barrow writes). The company said clients risk incurring substantial costs if they do not act promptly to reprogram computers to prevent systems from malfunctioning because they

may not recognise the 00 date suffix. Paul Davies, Parity chief executive, above, also said the company was well-placed to benefit from the trend to self-employment and home working. Parity increased pre-tax profits to £4.3 million from £3.07 million for the six months to June 30. Earnings were 6.75p a share (4.82p). The interim dividend is 1.4p (1p).

Refocusing at Williams may lead to disposals

BY PAUL DURMAN

WILLIAMS HOLDINGS yesterday revealed that this year's £223 million acquisition spree has led to a substantial rise in its debt-equity ratio, prompting suggestions that the company may seek to sell parts of its building products division. (See Pennington this page.)

Williams is keen to distance itself from its conglomerate past and is focusing on international businesses in fire protection, security and building products.

Zafar Khan, analyst at Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, said businesses in the UK such as Valor gas fires, Dreamland electric blankets, Larch-Lap fencing panels and Smallbone luxury kitchens looked out of place and could be candidates for disposal.

Roger Carr, Williams' chief executive, said he was comfortable with gearing that rose from under 20 per cent at the beginning of the year to 107 per cent at June 30. Borrowings rose to £370.9 million, but gearing was also pushed up by a £155 million fall in net assets.

Mr Carr said Williams' interest payments remained well covered at nine times and the group is strongly cash generative. The recent sale of the group's electronics business also brought in £71 million. Mr Carr added: "Our appetite for acquisitions is not diluted. The more our man-

agement teams become deeply entrenched in the industries where they now operate, the more they discover opportunities."

Williams was reporting an 11.4 per cent rise in first-half pre-tax profits to £114.9 million. Good progress in fire protection and security enabled the company to overcome the problems of weak building markets in continental Europe.

Williams is expecting similar trading conditions for the rest of the year. Analysts are forecasting full-year profits of around £245 million.

Building products is the biggest business, with sales of £438 million in the first half. An increased number of housing starts in the US helped to produce a £3.7 million rise in North American profits to £22.9 million, but the contribution from the European arm fell back to £38.9 million (£40.6 million). The economic problems of France and Germany depressed sales.

The fire protection division based on Kidde International has virtually doubled in size through acquisitions in the past year. Its profits rose by 28.6 per cent to £40.5 million, with 8 or 9 per cent of the improvement coming from organic growth.

Williams is paying an interim dividend of 5.8p a share, a 5.5 per cent rise.

AEA float attracts 'very strong private interest'

BY PAUL DURMAN

SHARES in AEA Technology, the nuclear decommissioning and waste management experts, are being offered at between 240p and 270p, giving the company an expected market value of up to £216 million.

The company, until recently part of the Atomic Energy Authority, is the Government's last privatisation before the general election. Only 10 per cent of its shares are earmarked for private investors. Sir Anthony Cleaver, after

the nuclear accident in the 1980s. Just over half of AEA Technology's £250-million-a-year business is nuclear-related. It employs 600 PhDs in every discipline from astrophysics to zoology.

After adjusting for reorganisation and other costs, the indicated price range puts AEA Technology's shares on a historic price-earnings multiple of between 15.1 and 17 times. At 240p, the company would be worth £192 million.

Delta's chief executive departs as profits tumble

BY OLIVER AUGUST

DELTA, the engineering group, yesterday disclosed a sharp fall in first-half profits and announced the departure of Robert Easton as chief executive.

The company reported a downturn in profits to £115 million before tax in the six months to June 30, from £155 million previously, affected by restructuring costs and a £5.7 million charge against a decline in the price of copper in the wake of the Sumitomo

copper scandal earlier this year. Mr Easton, who has been with Delta for 22 years and was made chief executive in 1989, had asked to retire last Christmas. He will be succeeded by Jon Scott-Maxwell, 44, a divisional managing director of GKN's Automotive Driveline business.

Despite a fall in earnings to 18p a share from 14.5p, the company is maintaining the interim dividend at 4.5p. The shares rose 24p to 40.1p.

Restructuring cost a total of £5 million.

Rexam in £300m sales plan

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

Rexam, the paper and packaging group, plans to raise up to £300 million from disposals as it continues its recovery after last year's dismal performance.

The company, which lost its FTSE 100 place earlier this year after a 40 per cent decline in share value, yesterday reported a 25 per cent fall in half-year profits to £83 million before tax and exceptional items. A 6.1p interim dividend (same) is due on November 8.

Jeremy Lancaster, chairman, said that the group had shown an improvement over the second half of last year, when profits plummeted because of extreme volatility in raw material prices.

He added that although profits for the first two months of the second half were ahead of last year, markets in Europe were still flat and the company is cautious about the outlook for the second half.

Ralph Boerjesson, the new chief executive, said Rexam would dispose of low-margin, underperforming divisions and concentrate on improving the return on assets in remaining divisions.

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Cash gusher gives Clyde Petroleum a lift

BY CARL MORTISHED

CLYDE PETROLEUM, the oil exploration group that took over Crusader, an Australian oil explorer in May, is enjoying a cash flow surge because of increased production and higher oil prices.

Oil production volumes averaged 39,153 barrels per day in the first half of the year, up from 37,618 bpd in the same period in 1995. Realised oil prices were up almost £2 per barrel, to £12.13, leading to a 24 per cent increase in pre-tax profits, to £24 million.

Clyde expects production for the year to average 45,000 bpd

including 45,000 bpd in the second half, with a 12 per cent contribution from the new Australian assets.

The surge in production was helped by Clyde's 6.6 per cent interest in the Andrew field in the North Sea, which came on stream six months early and 22 per cent below its budgeted development cost. Clyde's new Indonesian production interests provided 18 per cent of total oil volumes, contributing 1.3 million barrels for Clyde in the five months of ownership.

Clyde said that it was well ahead of its current oil



Malcolm Coulson, left, Clyde chairman, and Roy Franklin, managing director, yesterday

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

LucasVariety heads for top 100 in place of Thorn

LUCASVARIETY, the subject of a £3.2 billion merger between Lucas Industries and Variety Corporation of the US, will take its place later this month as a constituent of the FT-SE 100 index. It is likely to replace Thorn, which was demerged from EMI last month.

Since the demerger Thorn has steadily lost ground. It finished another 14p cheaper at 369p yesterday while LucasVariety added 11p at 239.1p. The constituent companies are reviewed every quarter by the actuaries which are due to meet any day now.

Entry is judged on the company's stock market capitalisation. At last night's close Thorn was valued at £1.65 billion.

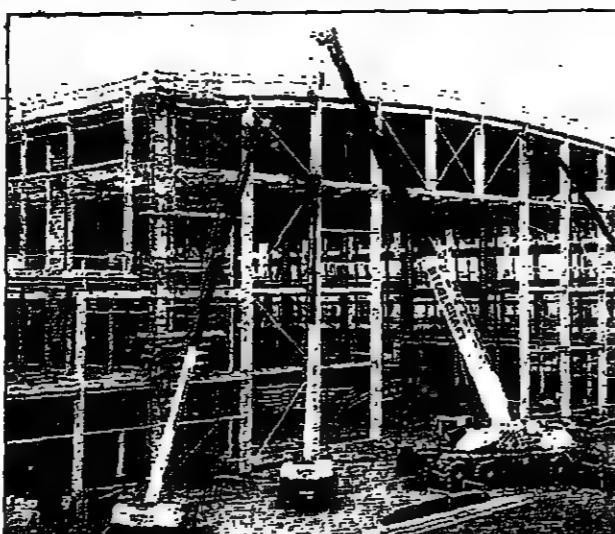
Another company facing the chop is Southern Electric, 3p dearer at 674.1p, which saw a bid by National Power earlier this year blocked by the Government. Both British Land and Rexam are also seen as likely contenders for index status. Rexam breached a sigh of relief yesterday that half-year figures were no worse than feared. The shares finished 14p better at 408.1p.

Elsewhere, share prices failed to maintain their early pace, having enjoyed a markup on the back of another strong performance by the Dow Jones overnight.

As part of an assault on the 4,000 level, the FT-SE 100 index reached a new intraday trading high of 3,933.6 before seeing its lead whittled away before the close after New York registered an opening fall. It ended the session 5.3 points up at 3,916.1. Trading remained flat with 723 million shares changing hands.

Among blue chips BT eased 2p to 370p after announcing plans to cut the cost of telephone charges. National call charges will be reduced by 10 per cent during peak times and 20 per cent during off-peak. The cuts will also affect international calls. BT says the price reductions amount to savings totalling £214 million and bring total reductions during the past three years to £1.5 billion.

Matthew Clark, the drinks distributor, saw its shares marked sharply lower after warning that profits had been hit by the introduction of "alcopop" drinks. Shareholders at the annual meeting were told that this had hit sales of its strong branded drinks like "K" and Diamond White by as



Severfield-Reeve, steelworkers, dipped 9p on profit-taking

much as 60 per cent. The introduction of cheap cider products had also taken its toll on profits. The shares finished the session 239p lower at 431p, wiping around £200 million from the group's stock market value of £392 million. Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, responded by cutting its profit forecast for Matthew Clark from £67.5 million to £52.5 million.

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expected to be accompanied by a cut in the dividend.

Unilever rose 6.1p to 131.46p after talking to a number of US fund managers about prospects.

Delta Group responded to some encouraging words on current trading with a rise of 24.1p at 402p. This was in spite of the expected drop in pre-tax profits during the first six months of the year from £35 million to £11 million.

A pledge by Alan Sugar, chairman, of better times to come enabled Amsterdam to finish 16.1p dearer at 155p. It came after the group plunged into the red last year with losses of almost £15 million after heavy restructuring. He said that Viglen and Betacom would return to profit next year and hoped Dancall could stem losses.

Half-year losses at Courtaulds Textiles failed to cloud the picture for brokers as the price rebounded 5.1p to 310.1p. A pre-tax deficit of £8.5 million came as a shock to the market. It followed a heavy restructuring programme reported to have cost £35 million and resulting in 15,000 jobs moving overseas.

First-half losses totalled almost £20 million against a profit last time of £4.3 million left Cape, manufacturer of fire protection products, marking time at 155p.

Profit-taking saw Severfield-Reeve, structural

steel engineers, nursing a fall of 9p from a peak of 301.1p to finish at 292.1p, after the group weighed in with half-year figures showing pre-tax profits doubled at £1.3 million.

■ GILT-EDGED: A sell-off of US Treasury bonds saw bond prices in London lose their early gains to close broadly unchanged. The market was not helped by comments from Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, who said he saw no reason for another cut in interest rates. In the future, the market's December series of the long gilt ended all-square at £106.171a in thin trading. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 was unmoved, at £97.29, while at the shorter end Treasury 7½ per cent 1998 marked time at £101.9p.

■ NEW YORK: On Wall Street early losses due to profit-taking were largely recouped and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 4.07 points lower at 5,729.77.

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million. The move left HIP Buhler 20p lower at 560p. Asda traded in narrow limits for much of the day before finishing 1p firmer at 109p on turnover of more than four million shares. Brokers will be anxious to see what Archie Norman has to say to shareholders later today at the group's AGM. They will want to see if he has comments about the supermarket price

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Mentoring by Morgan

DEREK DRAPER, Peter Mandelson's former boy wonder-cum-researcher and editor of *Progress*, a publication for Labour activists, has reason to feel abashed. He published a lengthy article in the latest issue praising Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, the company at the centre of last week's unit trust scandal. Draper describes MGAM's recent foray into Leytonstone Comprehensive as part of a mentoring scheme. "A far cry from the image most Labour supporters have of merchant banks," he gushes, adding that "next time we see the film *Wall Street* and Gordon Gekko is preaching 'greed is good', we should remember the other side of the City, those who practice the 'stakeholding is good' philosophy instead."

Two for one?

DEWE ROGERSON, the PR giant, yesterday distributed press releases giving the interim results of Pendragon, the car sales company, on notepaper headed with Nationwide's blue and green logo and address. Both Nationwide and Dewe Rogerison use Pims, the printing and services group. Could this be how the confusion arose, or is it just a case of cutting costs?

Gritty Lutheran

NATWEST could soon be press officer-less after an announcement yesterday that Edward Townsend, head of Group Media Relations, is leaving to join Luther Pendragon, the issues management consultancy. Townsend's news comes in the same week that Simon Lewis, director of corporate affairs, given up his seat at NatWest to join British Gas Energy. George Pitcher, who is joint managing director of Luther Pendragon, doesn't hold back when he describes Townsend, a cricket, rugby and jazz fan, as "a wise counsel and a gritty operator — in short, he is very Lutheran".


Measuring up

CABINET ministers across the Continent have handed over their waist and leg measurements to Dockers, which is part of Levi Strauss, in a bid for a free pair of the "casual" pants. By the end of this week, Kenneth Clarke, who boasts a 40-inch waist and a 31-inch inside leg, will have received his tan colour trousers. While Michael Heseltine, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and Helmut Kohl take the longest trouser length at 36 inches, the latter also has the largest waist measurement at 50 inches. Michael Portillo and John Major are mere slips of things with a willowy 34-inch waists.

Big spender

ONE can't help wondering about the significance of Psiorni spending £1.5 million investigating Alan Sugar's Amstrad before calling off the aborted merger, while Amstrad needed to spend only £300,000 on its inquiry into the high-flying Psiorni.

MORAG PRESTON

Testing times ahead for single currency's architects

Janet Bush
studies the
schedule
of EMU's
promoters

Preparations for a European single currency may seem like a rather dull virtual reality game to many in Britain, but on the Continent, hard decisions are already being made by those determined to join up in 1999. Even as Britain's political leaders carefully maintain enough ambiguity to avoid scaring voters come election time, the EMU clock is ticking.

The most public focus of the next few weeks will be budgets due to be unveiled by most of the major European economies for 1997, the test year written into the Maastricht treaty. A series of extremely tough austerity packages are in prospect after deficit overshoots almost everywhere in 1996; in France and Germany, the crucial twin pillars of the planned monetary union, borrowing is well above levels of two years ago.

In France, whose ability to meet the Maastricht deficit criteria is seen as the crucial arbiter of whether the single currency will happen in 1999, the public unions have already planned an autumn of strikes and protest marches against spending cuts that they see as an assault on the welfare state.

There has been much speculation, as the budget season gets under way, that European currencies could suffer from turbulence this autumn if financial markets are not convinced by the budget arithmetic or if political unrest looks as if it could threaten fiscal resolve.

However, this proposition is yet to be tested. There is ample evidence that the main players are prepared to fudge the Maastricht criteria enough to get a core of countries safely into the single currency on time, and the financial markets have done little to question the glaring compromises on the treaty.

This autumn will see how

far the markets are prepared to accept slippage from the most troublesome of the Maastricht criteria, the one limiting deficits to 3 per cent of gross domestic product. Reality dictates that most of the prospective core will do well to get somewhere between 3 and 4 per cent on deficits and that even Germany will settle for that. And if the politicians decide to go ahead on that basis, it is arguable whether the markets will bother to challenge them.

Delivering budget cuts is the most pressing and concrete challenge because 1997 is crunch year. However, this autumn also sees a series of meetings that will discuss some of the thorniest issues that need to be resolved before EMU. They are not as pressing as getting fiscal houses in order, but some progress is seen to be needed if momentum is to be maintained.

A largely technical discussion will continue on a so-called ERM II, a two-tier Euro.

The Euro is now acknowledged as a reality. The assumption is that a relatively small core of countries will join a single currency in 1999, with the rest staying outside, either until their economies converge towards agreed criteria or until their politicians decide that they want to join. The "ins" are determined that the "outs" should not be allowed to indulge in competitive devaluations to the detriment of "ins" and trading business from the City.

Interpretation of the Maastricht convergence criteria loosens, and yet there has been little discussion on access to Target, the new payments and settlements system proposed for the Euro. A row over this has been rumbling under the surface for some months amid allegations that France and Germany are trying to discriminate against the "outs", primarily Britain, in an attempt to wrest more financial and trading business from the City.

The most substantive issue of the next few months is the Stability Pact. In its original form, this was a proposal by Germany to impose discipline on members of EMU once the single currency is in place, fining members a proportion of their GDP if they allowed their deficits to drift out of line with the Maastricht limits.

This issue arguably becomes more important as in-

A combination that continues to stoke the political fires

Philip Bassett examines the link between the unions, pay and jobs



John Monks, left, and Ian Lang lead opposing camps

harder to see? Today *The Times* publishes a computer analysis of data held by the Government on the vexed connection between unions, pay and jobs. Using detailed information from the Government's quarterly Labour Force Survey, a rolling survey of a sample of 60,000 households, *The Times* shows what may be connections between some of the key forces in the economy.

The geographical distribution of trade union membership is likely to be virtually a matter of guesswork but data from the Government-sponsored Workplace Industrial Relations Survey series, and latterly the LFS, now allows estimates to be made about where union members are — and what their effects might be. The computer analysis indicates that high levels of union density are associated with lower levels of employment growth. There may, of course, be a number of causal explanations for this including labour market and industrial structures, the changing pattern of industry and business and the demographics of the workforce. But without suggesting that unionisation is the cause of lower employment growth, the pattern is star-

ting. Take Wales. With companies such as Sony, Ford and Hitachi investing in the Principality, employment growth has at least to some extent taken up some of the labour market slack created by the all but complete closure of the area's traditional heavy industries such as coal and steel.

Using the latest available LFS figures, Wales has the highest level of unionisation — 44 per cent of employees are union members. But looking at LFS figures on employment change over the past two years Wales is amongst the lowest performing of the UK regions, ranking seventh with employment growth of just 2.4 per cent or 28,000.

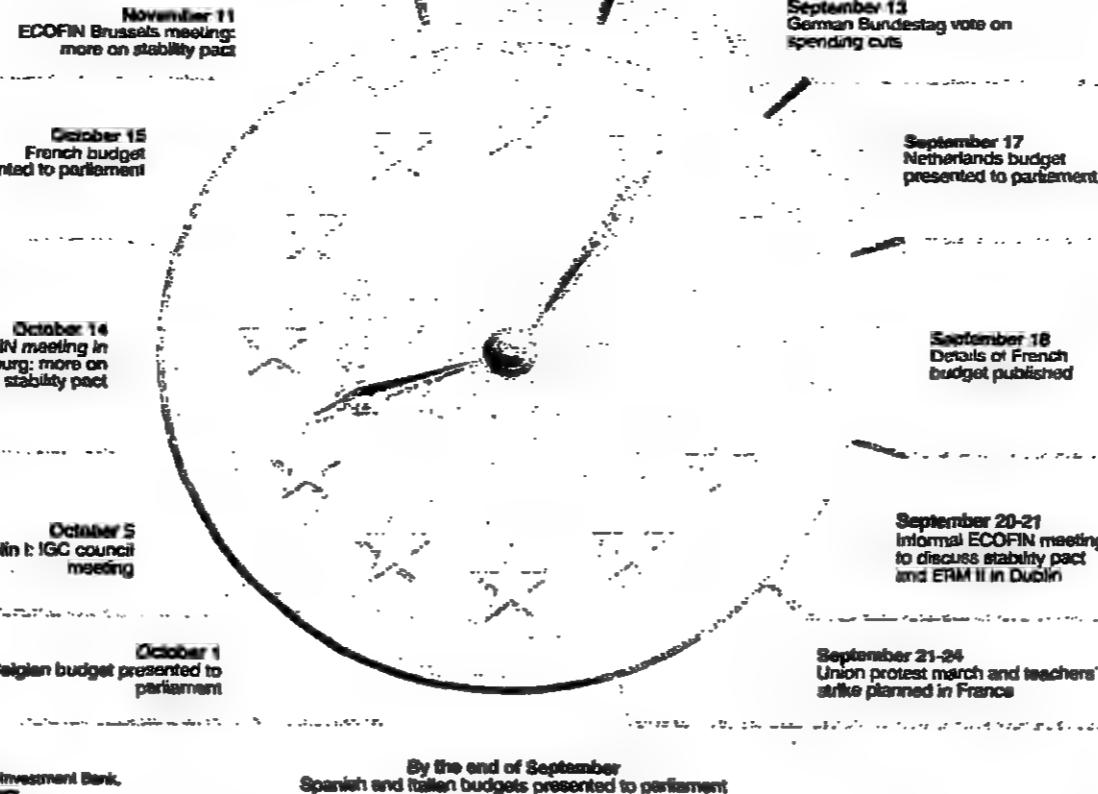
But it is clear, too, that some areas of high unionisation have seen some big earnings growth. The North West — third in the union density league table — has seen by far the sharpest growth in earnings, according to the LFS figures, with as much as 16 per cent, from a weekly average earnings level of £261 to £304. Yet even with such growth, it lags well behind some other areas, including Greater London which has a level of £396 and the South East with £354.

Union leaders strongly deny any causal connection between a stronger union presence and lower employment growth but, when coupled with earnings and the minimum wage, further ammunition in the war over the role of the trade unions looks again like featuring in the forthcoming general election.

مكانته في العمل

THE EMU CLOCK IS TICKING

Dublin II: European Council heads of state, foreign and finance ministers hope for agreement on stability pact



ANTHONY HARRIS

The unanswered question about US growth

Can any of you tell me why our economy cannot grow at 4 per cent?" President Clinton put this question to the Fed Board at an unofficial meeting when his new appointees joined. What none of them knew then was that the US economy was already growing at well above that rate — 4.8 per cent in the second quarter, on the revised figures. That short burst was aborted without inflationary mishap; but the pace has slowed since then, so the question remains unanswered. Indeed, there is still a different question to be faced first: will the Fed allow growth to be put to the test, or lose its nerve if the test picks up again?

The board is already split down the middle. The district presidents, who are practical men, close to industry but remote from technical economics, know that labour market pressures are growing, and they are audibly nervous. But Alan Greenspan, the Clinton appointee and the Fed's economic staff are excited by growing evidence that the restructured US economy is highly resistant to inflation. To pacify the district men, policy is now on red alert — a "tightening bias" means that interest rates can be raised in response to market pressures without waiting for a further FOMC meeting. But they remain reluctant to act unless they are pushed; and this week, the market signally failed to push them.

This rests on the known difficulties of measuring services and high-tech output. This could mean that the economy has been growing faster than Clinton's 4 per cent not just in the second quarter, but for some months. It could also be the clinching argument when the district presidents get nervous about labour markets. If growth is understated, productivity is understated, productivity is understated by exactly the same amount; and so, by implication, is the manageable growth of wage costs.

Further, the regional breakdown shows that the US labour market is flexible not only in the bargaining sense but is highly responsive to local pressures. Payroll growth has virtually stopped in the regions with the lowest unemployment, but is growing where the market is slack. This suggests that employers, instead of importing labour to meet local shortages, are expanding selectively where it is still available. Indeed, the US economy is notable not only for non-inflationary growth, but for achieving it during a massive structural change. This is flexibility with neon lights.

Wishful thinking? Perhaps and certainly vulnerable to any significant pickup in inflation itself. Until then, though, the experiment with what Brusca dismisses as "X-files-like strange happenings" may well continue.

INDUSTRIAL SERVICES

DELTA

INTERIM RESULTS

Continuing to focus investment on higher added value businesses with international potential.

	1996	1995
	£m	£m
Turnover	494.5	518.8
Profit before interest	17.0	39.5
Profit before tax	11.5	35.1
Earnings per share	1.8p	14.5p
Dividends per share	4.5p	4.5p

Copies of the Interim Report for the six months ended 29th June 1996, from which the above is an extract, are available from 1st September from the Secretary, Delta plc, 100 Newgate, London EC1B 5SL. Telephone 0171-256 5555.

CABLES

RECORDED AND INDEXED INFORMATION SERVICE

مَكَذا مِنَ الْأَصْلِ

Family homes enjoy a recovery

Central London houses lead the way in a survey of prices, writes Rachel Kelly

The most detailed picture of what is happening to house prices in London is shown today in new figures from Winkworth, the capital's largest chain of estate agents. They show the patchiness of the recovery, as the prospects for your des res are determined not simply by the estate agent's mantra - location, location - but also by property type.

In general, family houses are doing better than small flats, freehold and long leasehold property better than short leases, and well-done-up properties better than their tired or unattractive counterparts. Properties which are blighted in any way, be it by a busy road or a tricky lease, are still languishing. The asking prices may not have fallen, but the actual sale prices are still up to 40 per cent below 1988 levels.

Blackheath, Fulham, Notting Hill, Highbate and Islington are the best performers as the market is fuelled by demand which has built up over the past seven years as families have delayed moving, and further strengthened by low mortgage rates, low inflation, and rising prices.

House prices are up by 10 per cent over the past six months. In Islington, Hilary Wade, the marketing manager of Winkworth, says: "The typical pattern is that couples who have lived in Notting Hill flats for the past few years, and who are now starting families, find they cannot afford the minimum of £50,000 needed to buy a family house."

"So they are moving to less expensive places such as Islington. The migration from Kensington to Islington has been especially marked in the past few months," Winkworth says that prices for flats in the north London borough have risen by 15 per cent in the past six months.

Lorna Vestey from Knight Frank has picked out property on the Phillimore estate and around Victoria Road as the best Kensington performers.

Prices in Knightsbridge have risen by 8 per cent over the past six months, says Winkworth; prices up by 10 per cent in Belgravia, where Chester Square and Chesham Place are the most requested streets, say Knight Frank. In St John's Wood, prices are up 8 per cent. Top streets are Avenue Road, Cavendish Avenue, and Norfolk Road.

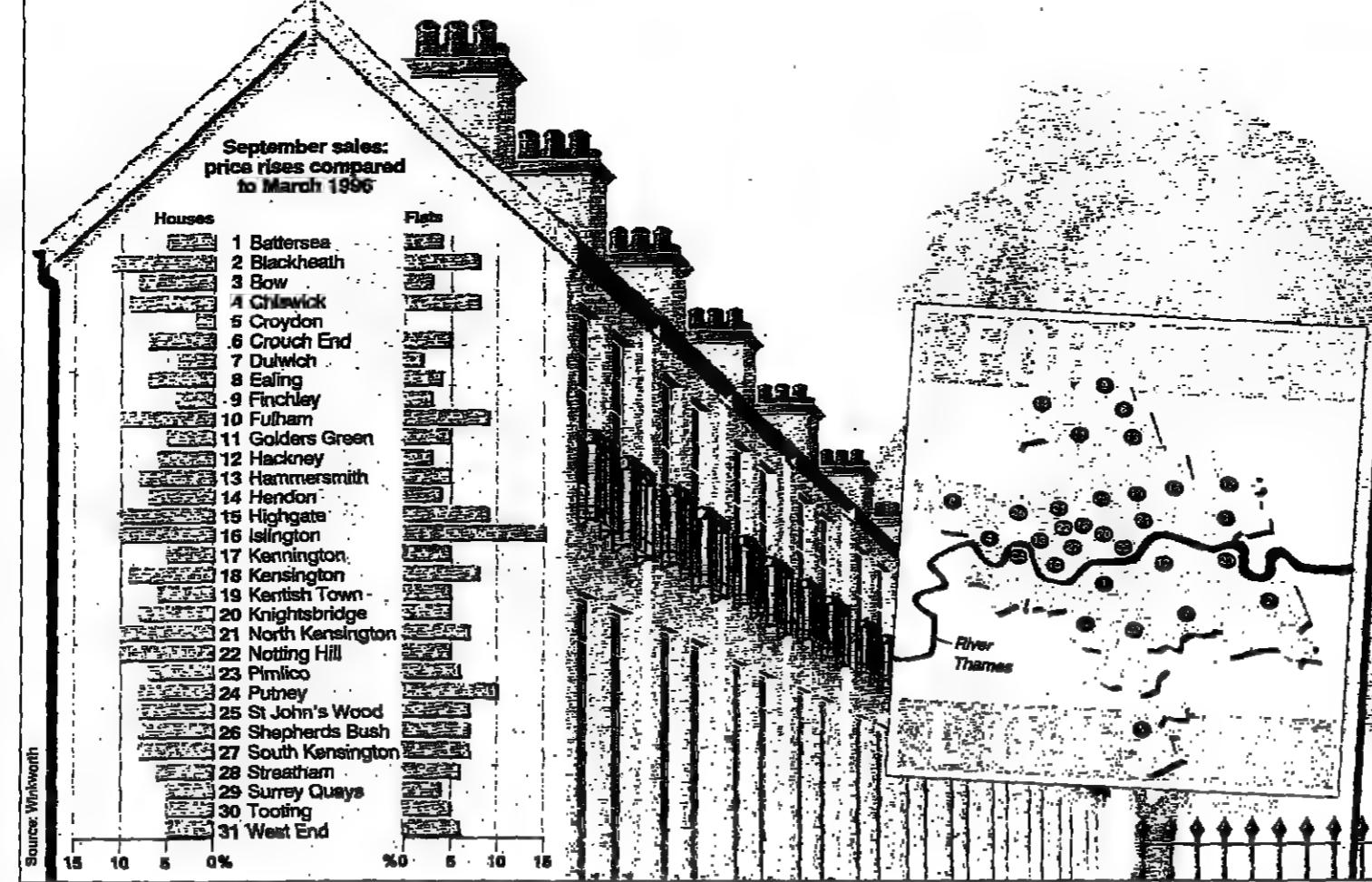
In contrast, the outer suburbs have not yet experienced a recovery like central London's. Flats in Croydon, for example, have shown no change in prices over the past six months which, allowing for inflation, means a fall in value in real terms.

Other areas that are suffering include East Dulwich, Peckham, Catford, and parts of Hackney, including Stoke Newington, although Hackney is benefiting from bordering Islington and being close to the City.

Ms Wade says: "The areas that have suffered most in the past seven years are finding that at last house prices are creeping up. But the same is not true for one-bedroom flats, poor conversions and small or scruffy two-bedroom flats." John D. Wood notices a move of well-off families from central London to Wandsworth, Wimbledon, Chiswick and Richmond to be close to day schools. George Pope of John D. Wood says: "In the past, such families might have moved to wherever their eldest child was due to go to boarding school. Now, many more parents are sending their children to London day schools." This change has led to price rises in areas such as Wandsworth, where large family houses can now sell for more than £750,000.

One-bedroom flats are performing

CHANGES IN LONDON PROPERTY PRICES



Source: Winkworth

for example, have shown no change in prices over the past six months which, allowing for inflation, means a fall in value in real terms.

Other areas that are suffering include East Dulwich, Peckham, Catford, and parts of Hackney, including Stoke Newington, although Hackney is benefiting from bordering Islington and being close to the City.

Ms Wade says: "The areas that have suffered most in the past seven years are finding that at last house prices are creeping up. But the same is not true for one-bedroom flats, poor conversions and small or scruffy two-bedroom flats." John D. Wood notices a move of well-off families from central London to Wandsworth, Wimbledon, Chiswick and Richmond to be close to day schools. George Pope of John D. Wood says: "In the past, such families might have moved to wherever their eldest child was due to go to boarding school. Now, many more parents are sending their children to London day schools." This change has led to price rises in areas such as Wandsworth, where large family houses can now sell for more than £750,000.

One-bedroom flats are performing

well in Soho, Fitzrovia, and Covent Garden, where the desire to be fashionable combined with the need for a pied-à-terre boosts the market.

In Chelsea, an area not covered by Winkworth, Knight Frank says that prices have risen by more than anywhere else, up by 20 per cent

optimistic figures. But they are the best we have. Winkworth has the advantage of selling a greater volume of London property than any other agency, with 31 offices. And as agents point out, London has behaved in a completely different manner from the rest of the country. Knight Frank estimate that London prices are up 9.9 per cent over the last 12 months, while elsewhere they are up by 2.7 per cent.

Other agents add their voices to Winkworth's optimism. Louise Hewlett from Aylesford, which concentrates on properties in Belgravia, Kensington, Knightsbridge and the top end of the market, says: "This has been one of the best years that Aylesford has experienced for 25 years." Mr Pope estimates 10 per cent average price rises since January.

Stephan Miles-Brown, head of residential development at Knight Frank, notes that Clerkenwell, Holborn, Southwark and Spitalfields are all doing well; witness a number of new conversions of moribund commercial buildings to fashionable flats. Savills, says that July and August have been uncharacteristically busy, and estimates average rises throughout London of 7 per cent since January. Savills has now increased its forecast of annual rises in London from 4.7 per cent to 10.5 per cent.

But price rises do not mean that it is necessarily an easy market in which to take the plunge. Agents moan about the shortage of good quality property. Increased rents are producing high enough yields to attract investors and speculators in town, and already some hapless London buyers in some areas are finding that they are having to compete with sealed bids.

Rob Thomas, building society analyst with the city firm UBS, says that the number of monthly sales is less than 100,000 in England and Wales, compared with the 1990s' 100,000-plus a month. Last year, the Land Registry recorded 110,025 property sales in Greater London.

So we have not reached 1980s levels, and lack of supply is most endemic in the more pleasant bits of London.

Basically, if you have a well-built, period family home, close to shops, schools and green spaces, it will probably sell in less than a week for close to its asking price. But you will be unlikely to find anything to buy.

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Living in fear of being swallowed up by the Earth
Old mineshafts lie below houses quite where is uncertain

The residents of Westleigh Road, in Combe Down, a small village south of Bath, sleep ill at night: they fear waking to find their house has been swallowed up by the Earth. Rachel Kelly writes. No, this is no tale of the supernatural, but a story of homes that have been built on top of the old mines that provided the stone for Bath's fine houses. The mineshafts have been known to re-open unexpectedly.

More cracks are appearing around the home of another resident, Edward Perry, when the pensioner moved to the road in 1957, he had no idea of the perils below. No, this is no tale of the supernatural, but a story of homes that have been built on top of the old mines that provided the stone for Bath's fine houses. The mineshafts have been known to re-open unexpectedly.

Two boarded-up council houses are a nagging reminder that the land may be unstable. As a precaution, council tenants were moved three years ago. Now other homes are starting to crack. More than 40 acres of disused shallow stone mines lie below them.

The problem has long been known about. More than 18 months ago, HM Mines Inspectorate warned the former city council of the possibility of a catastrophic collapse. In 1991 the Environment Department's land-stability branch said the problem should be dealt with urgently.

More than 400 properties could be affected. In places, the load-bearing rock is less than an inch thick. Yet nothing has been done, nor will it be in the foreseeable future.

Paul Jackson, the chairman of a local forum on the mines, says: "Any solution for stabilising the mines should involve as little filling as possible. No one wants anything done that would cause the environment long-term damage. We need maintenance and repair where necessary, and to preserve the character of the mines where we can, developing them as a community asset. If they are well looked after, there will be no difficulty with the properties. Otherwise, there could be problems."

Alan May, who lives in the road, is already having difficulties. He said: "The value of my property has

been reduced. It's difficult to sell."

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Amanda Loose on the result of an eight-month battle to sell Service houses

A second chance to buy from the Government

Last week, a battle that has raged for the past eight months ended. The Ministry of Defence announced that it was selling its married quarters to Annington Homes, a consortium headed by the Japanese bank Nomura International.

With the recent improvement in the market, the Ministry's timing is fortuitous. Its portfolio will be much in demand. Developers are already fighting over 1,250 acres of surplus land at RAF Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire. A consortium of Wimpey, Taylor Woodrow and Westbury plans to build 5,000 homes there.

property ladder, they will move first-time buyers out of rented accommodation.

"Buyers will be able to put their own identity into the house, which will give them collateral which they can then sell on. This will create second-time buyers, which drives the market."

"My only fear is that because these prices will be effectively subsidised below their market value, it could be difficult for buyers to make their second step up the property ladder."

Richard Haynes of Knight Frank agrees. "There will be demand if the developers get the price right. He adds: "The MoD properties are a mixed bag, but the consortium recognises that it will have to do a lot of work to make some of the houses more attractive and spend some money. But in selected areas, it will be able to do something quite positive. An extensive period will have to be allowed to sell blocks of flats."

Developers might sell some, then add more community facilities. It will have to be a progressive process. It is a fascinating portfolio.

The Ministry has previously sold some of its surplus properties. Since 1993, about 2,828 MoD houses have been sold, some to individuals and housing associations, but most to property developers. This figure includes just under 100 homes at RAF Finningley in South Yorkshire.

Sales include 50 surplus houses at RAF Brampton in Cambridgeshire. All of the remaining houses at RAF Finningley, in South Yorkshire, will be sold as freehold.

In turn, the developer gains

2,700 empty homes and will benefit from the rent roll. This will be paid by the MoD for the bulk of the remaining 55,000 homes that it is leasing back with 200-year underleases, and which the MoD will continue to manage. After 25 years, Annington will be able to redevelop sites, subject to local planning permission.

The obvious political sensitivity of the sale has meant that there are strict rules governing what Annington can and cannot do. It will be able to remove Service families from estates, but will have to provide alternative accommodation. It will be able to offer a "site exchange" to the MoD, but only if the alternative estate meets firm conditions.

A spokesman for NatWest Markets, which is handling the sale, said: "MoD houses will be passed on to the new owner only when an entire

block or concentrated area is available.

"This is at the behest of the Service families, who want to remain together. The new owners will be able to do what they like, because the houses will be in a separate area, perhaps across a road, from the existing military site.

Some houses cannot be included in the sell-off, for security reasons. Properties at Windsor cannot be sold because they are on Crown Estate land.

The MoD is selling at the direction of the Treasury to raise £1.6 billion. The deal is that it will remain the freehold owner of the 57,700 MoD properties in England and Wales. Only their leases have been sold, for 999 years, to Annington Homes.

Surplus housing has been a long-term problem for the MoD. Before the sell-off, 12,000 MoD houses were empty, approximately twice the number of vacant homes needed by the Ministry to accommodate relocations. The hope is that Annington will be better at managing the housing stock than the MoD was. And thanks to the sell-off, the MoD will off-load 2,700 homes immediately and gain Treasury funds to upgrade its housing stock.

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1996

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■ OPERA 1
Prima donna of the demi-monde: Rosa Mannion prepares for the Coliseum's *La traviata*



■ OPERA 2
After Zaha Hadid's aborted opera house, Cardiff plans a new bid for lottery money



■ TOMORROW
A serious challenge for Sandra Bullock? Read Geoff Brown on all the latest movies



■ ON FRIDAY
Forward with the reborn R.E.M.: David Sinclair talks to the band of the moment

OPERA: Hilary Finch on Rosa Mannion, the soprano who sings the doomed heroine in Jonathan Miller's new staging of *La traviata*

A new Violetta for the Coliseum

Eavesdropping in a café not far from the Coliseum. It's a few days into rehearsals for Jonathan Miller's new production of *La traviata* at English National Opera, and there's a heavy scene between scenes, over a bowl of taco chips. An American singer (judging by his voice, his pocket score) is facing an English doctor of medicine (judging by his expression of concern) who is giving him gentle directorial advice. "Reach out to her, across that vast space between you. As if ... it was all your fault that any of this ever happened."

But of course the New York baritone Christopher Robertson is hardly to blame — and nor is Dr Miller for that matter — for all that Rosa Mannion, singing her first Violetta in this *Traviata*, will suffer in her short life as Verdi's Dame aux camélias. The role of Violetta is, after all, a natural step for Mannion after her Gilda in *Rigoletto* at ENO two years ago; and there's nothing particularly daunting in it for her from a vocal point of view. But, as that café exchange suggested, the production itself is likely to give the wifey a wringing.

The relationships are so real, that the temptation is to put all that intensity into the voice," Mannion says. "But the emotions mustn't overwhelm what you do vocally. It's to do with pacing the role."

Pacing her own career is something at which Mannion has shown herself expert. After three years (1989-92) as a principal soprano at ENO, she has been travelling to Lisbon and Amsterdam with John Eliot Gardiner as his Dorabella, to Berlin for Rosenkavalier's Sophie, to Paris, to Salzburg, and to Aix-en-Provence with William

Christie and Les Arts Florissants. While she has felt that ENO has been a welcoming home base, Mannion seems to be yet another example of an English singer offered major roles in big European houses — but not (except for one Pamina) at Covent Garden.

Not that her career has ever been predictable. It began with a sudden veering-off-course. At 18 she gave up her place at the Royal Liverpool Teaching Hospital and rushed to Scotland for a last-minute audition at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. Three years later she was catapulted into Scottish Opera as Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* in a three-year contract followed.

"I really wasn't prepared for the business. I hadn't a clue how it all worked." She walked into a stack of hoes in Graham Vick's "farmyard" production of the Donizetti, and was knocked unconscious. At five hours' notice she sang Constance at Glyndebourne. And she sang the role on tour later, five months pregnant and racing off stage after every aria, sick as a dog.

And now, at 34, Violetta.

"Yes — a big breath! Violetta is, after all, incredibly bright, incredibly beautiful. And yet,

coming from a background of rural poverty, she has no normal way into society. So she has to climb an alternative ladder, in the demi-monde.

"She equates Alfred —

young, innocent, clean-cut — with her health. She thinks that if she throws in her lot with him, it'll bring back her health. When he leaves her, she nosedives to death. And when he returns, she realises that it isn't enough. Her love of him and her love of life part. That's the only way I can make sense of it."

• *La traviata* opens at the Coliseum (0171-632 8300) tomorrow



Rosa Mannion, as Violetta: "The relationships are so real, the temptation is to put all that intensity into the voice. But the emotions mustn't overwhelm what you do vocally"

... and fresh hope in Wales

An opera house may yet be built in Cardiff. Simon Tait reports

Next Monday, almost nine months after the Millennium Commission consigned the Cardiff Bay Opera House to the list of National Lottery might-be-beens, a new lottery bid starts its perilous journey through the minefield.

It is for a music theatre to provide a home for Welsh National Opera on the same site, and it is supported by the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation (CBDC). But there are any similarity with Zaha Hadid's ill-fated "glass necklace" opera house ends.

This is something else a partnership between an opera company and a national museum for a joint cultural centre. "The Wales Millennium Centre" is its working title, notable for the absence of that tricky word "opera".

The new bid has a 2,000-seat theatre as big as Hadid's. But it also has a waterfront museum for the National Museum of Wales, a new administrative home for WNO, a rehearsal stage, an Imax cinema and a block of shops. In the words of Michael Boyce, chief executive of the CBDC: "It's simply more for less."

The less is the cost, about 75 per cent of the previous scheme which was wound up in March. That scheme, according to Boyce, had its priorities inverted: design first, then purpose, public support and finally finance. The new Wales Millennium Centre Company is starting with finance and working through to design. No architect is likely to be named before the end of September.

Boyce is undismayed by the call from Lord Rogers and the RIBA (in support of Hadid) for architects to boycott the competition to design the new Bay building. "It will not be designed and it will not be

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BOYCE

RUGBY UNION

England rule out Australia bid for tour finale

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

CONFUSION within rugby union is not confined to the British Isles. Yesterday, one end of the world believed an international match between England and Australia would take place at Twickenham on December 7 while, at the other end, the fixture was denied, albeit with some reluctance.

Discussions, which began at the International Rugby Football Board's tours committee meeting in Cardiff last week, ended with the announcement in Sydney of an additional match in the tour by Australia to Italy, Scotland, Ireland and Wales this autumn. The traditional game with the Barbarians was to be shunted back to midweek, John O'Neill claimed, and the touring side would play England on the Saturday instead.

Not only that. According to O'Neill, the Australian Rugby Union's chief executive, there will be a grand-slam tour of

Britain and Ireland every four years. "We are delighted by this outcome," O'Neill said, though surprise was more the emotion of his counterparts in the northern hemisphere.

Ray Williams, chairman of the four home unions' tours committee, hastened to redress the balance with the full support of the Rugby Football Union (RFU). "A proposal was put to a recent meeting of the committee that Australia play England rather than the Barbarians on December 7," Williams said. "But the Barbarians' match against the touring team is a very special fixture. It was agreed that it was not possible to change the international calendar at such short notice.

"We did look very hard at a number of alternative ways in which a grand-slam fixture might be accommodated, but the difficulties were insurmountable. Over 30,000 tick-

ets have already been sold for the Barbarians' match at Twickenham and, all in all, we consider it in the best interests of all four home unions that the present arrangements stand."

The fact that England have a full first-division league programme on December 7 may also have been germane to the argument, given the poor state of relationships between the RFU and the leading clubs. The clubs, assuming they have not broken away entirely and denied their players international matches by then, are already destined to lose their leading lights to England for a fortnight when the national team plays Italy (November 23) and the New Zealand Barbarians (November 30), and for a further week prior to the game against Argentina (December 14).

An RFU spokesman admitted that a fixture with Australia would be hugely attractive. "But there is an equal attraction for the Barbarians game and the clubs propose to support the Barbarians," he added. As matters stand, the Australians will play Italy (October 23), Scotland (November 9), Ireland (November 23) and Wales (December 1).

But O'Neill did make the point that the southern-hemisphere powers could not rely exclusively on fixtures with each other. "I think we recognise Australia playing New Zealand and South Africa all the time is not for the betterment of the game," he said. "If there is this perceived gap [in playing standards] — and I think the results show there is a gap between southern and northern-hemisphere rugby — the way to close it is to play each other more regularly."

Wales will name a squad today for the game with France, in Cardiff on September 25. Depending on France's result, it will be back full back after an 11-month absence.

As usual it is the players

who could rescue the tournament. Bath and Swansea, for example, put genuine XV's on show at the Recreation ground tonight, the English club fielding their imports from Wigan, Henry Paul and Jason Robinson, against a Welsh team including Scott Gibbs, Richard Webster plays in the Bath back row against his old club for whom Anthony Clement appears at full back after an 11-month absence.

Anglo-Welsh matches off to chaotic start

IT MAY have seemed like a good idea at one time, but the Anglo-Welsh tournament began this week in a state of disarray (David Hands writes). Though it has received the official sanction of the respective unions, the management and competition rules are sadly lacking, one attractive match has already dropped by the wayside, and the hastily-contrived television coverage has fallen through, if only temporarily.

The Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) believed it had in place an arrangement with BBC Wales and S4C, the Welsh language channel, to cover the game between Neath and Bristol last night, and the one at Bridgend

tonight, where Wasps are the visitors. But the broadcasters, unhappy at the level of co-operation they have received from the clubs, have withdrawn, though they will meet the WRU later this week.

As usual it is the players

who could rescue the tournament. Bath and Swansea, for example, put genuine XV's on show at the Recreation ground tonight, the English club fielding their imports from Wigan, Henry Paul and Jason Robinson, against a Welsh team including Scott Gibbs, Richard Webster plays in the Bath back row against his old club for whom Anthony Clement appears at full back after an 11-month absence.

True farcism was, of course,

a hypocrisy. It was based on an untruth: that rugby union was an amateur game. Faridism believed its own lie: that payment by backhand and favour was morally superior to a wage. The game became an increasingly crazy and towering structure, and, in the end, it had to collapse.

And so rugby union is now a professional sport, like football, like Formula One motor racing. Which is all very well as far as the end of hypocrisy goes. But

Childish delight denied to big names

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

And for a moment the thought occurred, perhaps the old farts were right after all. On Sunday I was with 8,000 people watching 30 men playing professional rugby union at a football ground, and the talk was all of big money and big hits, television revenue and the next superstar signing.

The farts have been blown away by the typhoons and hurricanes of change. Rugby union has gone spinning and reeling into the post-artist world, where the sport you love is called "the product", its unique beauties are called "the image" and the standard wisdom of the time is that "we're part of the entertainment industry". And everywhere, men in sharp suits or sponsored boots are dancing on the grave of farcism.

Farcism must not pass un-mourned. Certainly, farcism, as skewed by that stray remark of Will Carling's, has been for years a nonsense. But like many other nonsense, farcism has at its heart an important truth.

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Hill (left) and Fry, two sportsmen from different eras with different approaches to their sporting pursuits

at the heart of farcism was the kernel of truth: that there is some good in real amateurism.

Let us go back to Formula One and to Damon Hill to clip the tyres at the chicane during the Italian Grand Prix last Sunday. One moment he had the world championship in his hand; the next as if he were a man seizing a handful of water, it had gone.

He was wearing overalls, fireproof boots and a huge helmet, the camera only

caught him in long-shot, and yet it was impossible to miss his despair. The carriage of the head said it all. This was not the disappointment of a man having a bit of fun on a Sunday afternoon. No, this was deep and bitter anguish.

This was a man whose entire life, his entire being, his entire conception of his place in the universe depends on his prowess at driving in motor car races. An error cannot be

laughed off, for it asks the most profound and uncomfortable questions about the nature and meaning of his life. That is why Formula One is riveting to so many people; that is why sport commands such massive worldwide attention. We see people playing spectacular games for the highest possible stakes. And their elation and their despair fill our screens, our living rooms, our minds. And it is, in a way, too much.

Ask a professional actor

about the difference between professional and amateur theatre, and you will always get the same answer. One has as its priority the pleasure of the audience, the other the pleasure of the cast.

As an amateur, you can take defeat and victory in your stride and know them for the impostors they are, because for you, it does not matter. That glorious cross-country ride at Poncon, that defiance of the Nicky Bird XI, that saving of Mark Wong's penalty: simple joys I have known from simple kids' games.

Had my life, or my livelihood, or my sense of self-worth depended on such things, with such a time. It is professional, and therefore, intense to the point of lunacy and beyond. Sport was never intended to bear such things, the weight of the ambitions of a lifetime of a nation. But it does, and from that lunacy comes the compelling nature of modern professional sport.

We live in an age of sporting madness, as any unbiased skimming of these pages will tell you. No professional rugby union player will have a light heart this weekend: it is more than his job is worth. Rugby, like every other elite sport, cannot possess the simple light-hearted joys that every amateur knows.

That thing that the old farts valued had already been gone for years from elite rugby union, but that did not mean it was worthless. We who play for simple-minded fun, we who play from mere childish delight possess something that the great athletes of the world can never know.

Modern sport does not

begin to compare with such things, with such a time. It is professional, and therefore, intense to the point of lunacy and beyond. Sport was never

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TENNIS: MILLIGAN PRODUCES COURAGEOUS PERFORMANCE BUT GOES OUT AGAINST SECOND SEED AT BOURNEMOUTH

Rusedski benefits on day of mixed fortune for Britons

By ALIX RAMSAY

EVEN the best-laid plans can go awry, especially when the plans involve playing tennis during what passes for the British summer. In a chill and overcast Bournemouth, Andrei Medvedev, the No 4 seed, was sent packing by Tom Kemps, a qualifier ranked 512 in the world. Greg Rusedski, a qualifier ranked 512 in the world, was preparing for a tough first-round match against Joao Cunha-Silva, only to face a last-minute replacement, while the No 2 seed, Felici Mantilla, had to work much harder than he thought to get past Luke Milligan. It was that sort of day.

All things considered, Rusedski fared better than most. Ten minutes before he was due to go on court he was told that Cunha-Silva, from Portugal, had an injured knee and had pulled out. His place was taken by Bernardo Mota, also from Lisbon, but ranked 327, a fact that made Rusedski's day a lot brighter — "actually I was quite pleased," he said with the customary grin. No wonder he dismantled Mota's challenge, 6-1, 6-2, in a fraction under an hour.

It has been a disappointing year for Rusedski so far. He has almost done well, pushing Becker, Sampras, Courier and Rosset to the limit but never quite making the breakthrough. Meanwhile, his ranking has slipped to 75 while Tim Henman has stolen the limelight and the computer points. Suddenly the novelty seems to have worn off both Rusedski and his career.

"It all has to do with maturing as a player," he said. 

Bruguera: straight-sets win

Now he languishes at 31 with only one title to his name this year.

"Transferring from the hard courts at the US Open to clay has been difficult. For some reason, I couldn't adjust," he said. "This is my first time on green clay and it is very different from red. It is slower and harder to make winners."

Milligan's day was better than he had expected. Playing Mantilla, the No 2 seed and No 16 in the world, he put up a fine fight but could not match the power of the 21-year-old Spaniard and lost 6-4, 6-1. His plan had been to trade shots from the baseline for a couple of games to see what Mantilla could do and then take a few risks to see if he could stop him. Sometimes it worked, more often it did not. But all in all, Milligan was not too upset.

His summer has been productive, reaching the third round at Wimbledon and claiming his place in the Britain Davis Cup squad. But although the brief spell in the headlines was enjoyable, Milligan's present aims are a little more down to earth. His ranking is not affected by his fame and his next goal is to break into the top 180 and out of the round of challenger tournaments.

But before that — "I have four tournaments coming up where, hopefully, I can get my ranking up" — there is that matter of the Davis Cup in ten days' time.

In one of the few matches to go according to the form book, Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, the No 5 seed, beat Nuno Marques, of Portugal, 6-1, 6-2.

Rusedski launches a powerful service on his way to victory over the replacement, Mota



AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): Green Bay 39, Philadelphia 13

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Milwaukee 6, Boston 0; Cleveland 4, California 3; Baltimore 5, Detroit 4; Texas 4, Toronto 3

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Atlanta 6, Florida 1; Colorado 1, Cincinnati 2; Houston 2, Los Angeles 7; Cincinnati 2, San Diego 6; Pittsburgh 5, St Louis 6; San Francisco 2

BOWLS

ENGLISH BOWLING ASSOCIATION OVER-50 CHAMPIONSHIPS: Gloucester 1, Wiltshire 0; Wiltshire 1, Gloucester (Somerset) 1; Dorset 1, Gloucester 21-4; F. Ashby (Worcestershire) 21-6; P. Bryant (Birmingham) 21-2; G. Tye (Somerset) 21-1; J. Gooch (Leicestershire) 21-16; Peirce P. Pinnaque and R. Hernsby (Gloucestershire) 21-1; R. Shilling and L. Andring (Wiltshire) 19-1; K. James and J. Pender (Essex) 23-14; and A. Walmsley (Lancashire) 21-18. R. Becker and H. Craig (Surrey) 26-18; A. Hamer and S. Swindell (Surrey) 21-18; and K. Steel (Hampshire) 18-15. All Swindell. Quarter-finals: J. Hockfield (Cornwall) 21-12; M. Adams (Derbyshire) 21-12; J. Jones (Wales) 21-12; and K. Moore (Wales) 21-12. M. Over (Somerset) 21-12; E. Gentry (Cumbria) 21-18; J. Rydell (Essex) 21-12; M. Mould (Nottinghamshire) 21-12; and E. Evans (Wales) 21-12. M. Waters and D. Bradbury (Lincolnshire) 21-18; W. Sowery and A. Reeves (Cumbria) 21-18; G. T. Redfern (Hampshire) 21-18; E. Housden and A. Young (Huntingdonshire) 21-18; and J. Wilson (Buckinghamshire) 21-12. ENGLISH BOWLS: Open tournament: Men's singles: Third round: F. Cuthbert (1) vs G. Gentry 21-9; A. Mitchell (2) vs D. Redfern 21-10; C. Cook (3) vs M. Waters 21-10; F. Rydell (4) vs J. Wilson 21-10; N. Bishop (5) vs M. McCrory 21-17; D. Morgan (6) vs C. Rosser 21-17; K. Jones (7) vs C. P. Pearce 19-17 (time expired); R. S. Cook (8) vs J. Rydell 21-16; J. Rydell (9) vs C. Jones 21-16; A. Brockwell (10) vs A. Densley 21-16; A. Brockwell (11) vs A. Densley 21-16; J. Newman (12) vs G. Hoddinott 21-11; D. Hoddinott (13) vs G.

CYCLING

TOUR OF SPAIN: Fourth stage (Albacete to Madrid) 106.5 km: 1, D. Poide (1); L. Enniger (2); J. Stevens (3); C. Forrest (4); 2, J. Stevens (1); C. Forrest (2); 3, D. Poide (1); 4, L. Enniger (2); 5, J. Stevens (3); 6, J. Stevens (4); 7, M. Simeczi (5); 8, D. Poide (6); 9, L. Enniger (7); 10, C. Forrest (8); 11, J. Stevens (9); 12, D. Poide (10); 13, L. Enniger (11); 14, J. Stevens (12); 15, D. Poide (13); 16, L. Enniger (14); 17, J. Stevens (15); 18, D. Poide (16); 19, L. Enniger (17); 20, C. Forrest (18); 21, J. Stevens (19); 22, D. Poide (20); 23, L. Enniger (21); 24, J. Stevens (22); 25, D. Poide (23); 26, L. Enniger (24); 27, J. Stevens (25); 28, D. Poide (26); 29, L. Enniger (27); 30, J. Stevens (28); 31, D. Poide (29); 32, L. Enniger (30); 33, J. Stevens (31); 34, D. Poide (32); 35, L. Enniger (33); 36, J. Stevens (34); 37, D. Poide (35); 38, L. Enniger (36); 39, J. Stevens (37); 40, D. Poide (38); 41, L. Enniger (39); 42, J. Stevens (40); 43, D. Poide (41); 44, L. Enniger (42); 45, J. Stevens (43); 46, D. Poide (44); 47, L. Enniger (45); 48, J. Stevens (46); 49, D. Poide (47); 50, L. Enniger (48); 51, J. Stevens (49); 52, D. Poide (50); 53, L. Enniger (51); 54, J. Stevens (52); 55, D. Poide (53); 56, L. Enniger (54); 57, J. Stevens (55); 58, D. Poide (56); 59, L. Enniger (57); 60, J. Stevens (58); 61, D. Poide (59); 62, L. Enniger (60); 63, J. Stevens (61); 64, D. Poide (62); 65, L. Enniger (63); 66, J. Stevens (64); 67, D. Poide (65); 68, L. Enniger (66); 69, J. Stevens (67); 70, D. Poide (68); 71, L. Enniger (69); 72, J. Stevens (70); 73, D. Poide (71); 74, L. Enniger (72); 75, J. Stevens (73); 76, D. Poide (74); 77, L. Enniger (75); 78, J. Stevens (76); 79, D. Poide (77); 80, L. Enniger (78); 81, J. Stevens (79); 82, D. Poide (80); 83, L. Enniger (81); 84, J. Stevens (82); 85, D. Poide (83); 86, L. Enniger (84); 87, J. Stevens (85); 88, D. Poide (86); 89, L. Enniger (87); 90, J. Stevens (88); 91, D. Poide (89); 92, L. Enniger (90); 93, J. 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Once past the elephants, it all became clear

When a four-star general starts talking elephants, it tends to be time to lay away his weapons of war. Thankfully, however, General Normal Schwarzkopf has already swapped his for retirement, which means we could sit back and enjoy *Timewatch: Hannibal and Desert Storm* (BBC2), without worrying... well, not too much.

It was time to talk elephants, serious elephants. Did you know, for instance, that Hannibal's *maisons* went into battle armed with a sharp spike and a hammer? Or that going up the Alps on an elephant is one thing, but coming down quite another? Or even, that if you are about to set off on a 1,300-mile march through Spain, across France and into Italy, you are best off taking Indian elephants or, failing them, African forest elephants? The African bush elephant would barely get you past Gibraltar, apparently.

"What's all this got to do with Desert Storm?" you're asking, and for the first ten minutes of last night's fascinating programme, I asked myself exactly the same question. But after a few sweeping statements, such as "the truth is that it was Hannibal who inspired the battle plans used to such devastating effect by the allied coalition in the Gulf", it quickly became clear that the answer was "precious little".

For what we had here was not quite the complex comparison of military tactics that it purported to be. This was a straightforward history lesson, a welcome and well told reminder of what Hannibal actually did once he had got those elephants over the Alps. Maps and computer graphics kept the geography and battles under control, while Schwarzkopf supplied the admiring footnotes. "The first thing I ever learned in the study of military art was about the great

captains, and the great captains start with Hannibal."

"Military art", it emerged, is one of those curious euphemisms for killing people, an art in which Hannibal of Carthage was well versed. On the banks of the Trebbia, his forces killed 20,000 Roman soldiers before breakfast. At Lake Trasimene, the Romans lost 30,000 more. These, however, were but warm-ups to the big one – Cannae, when 80,000 legions took on the remnants of Hannibal's footsore but battle-hardened army – and lost.

According to Schwarzkopf he pulled off this "super victory" by employing three principles of war: mass, manoeuvre and... one that I've forgotten, so for goodness sake don't ask me to lead you into battle. Was it muscle? Or mayhem perhaps? Who knows, but there would have been plenty of both, according to

Schwarzkopf, who was confident there were parallels to be drawn between Cannae and Desert Storm. But for all his maps and diagrams I wasn't altogether convinced. No elephants, for a start.

We seemed on surer ground when the producer, Jonathan

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

our man in the shadows, Andy McNab. Killing 50,000 Romans in a single day, he pointed out, would have been a messy business.

Schwarzkopf was confident there were parallels to be drawn between Cannae and Desert Storm. But for all his maps and diagrams I wasn't altogether convinced. No elephants, for a start.

We seemed on surer ground when the producer, Jonathan

Stamp, turned his attention to what happened next. For just as the Allies never got to Baghdad, Hannibal never marched on Rome. He believed that the humiliation inflicted at Cannae would cause the collapse of the Roman political system. Just like the Allies, he was wrong.

The killing got more specific in *Network First: A View to a Kill* (ITV). There were names, faces, stories. In 1988 Leo Jenkins, a convicted burglar freed from a Texas prison under a controversial early release scheme, shot and killed Mark and Kara Kelley in the pawn shop they ran for their parents. Eight years later the state of Texas was about to kill Jenkins. What made this tragic story unusual was that for the first time, the victims' relatives would be allowed to watch the execution.

Understandably, Rod Williams's film of the week leading up to the execution concentrated on Linda Kelley, Mark and Kara's mother, a decision which in turn made it impossible to come to any objective conclusions about the rights and wrongs of what was going on. Like the Kelleys, we were too close.

Linda Kelley, Mark and Kara's mother, a decision which in turn made it impossible to come to any objective conclusions about the rights and wrongs of what was going on. Like the Kelleys, we were too close.

The film's concluding scenes were marked by a curious disagreement about the destination of Jenkins's soul. According to the prison chaplain, he had repented and was en route to Heaven. Linda Kelley, whose initial reaction to the execution was simply "I feel much better now", was in no doubt. Jenkins was dead and going straight to Hell.

Finally, a word or three about Steven Clarke's stylish but superficial look at the door-to-door salesmen of the Wesleyan Assurance Company for *Picture This: Life at a Premium* (BBC2). The financial services industry will never have an easier ride.

• Lynne Truss is on holiday

BBC1

6.00am **Business Breakfast** (651121) 7.00 **BBC Breakfast News** (Ceefax) 9.00 **Breakfast News Extra** (Ceefax) (8036169)

9.20 **Style Challenge** (3358643) 9.45 **Kilroy** (1200169) 10.30 **Can I Cook, Won't Cook** (74072)

11.00 **News and weather** (4652701)

11.05 **Rebels: The Alternative** (1/2) Film dramatisation of the controversy surrounding one of the world's worst air disasters – the destruction of an Air New Zealand DC10, which flew into the side of a mountain in November 1979 (f) (55790140)

12.30pm **Mary Berry's Ultimate Cakes** (19159275)

1.00 **News and weather** (94409) 1.30 **Regional News** (5342379)

1.40 **Neighbours** (Ceefax) (s) (32610898) 2.00 **Call My Bluff** (6278091) 2.35 **Turnabout** (1814169) 3.00 **A Week in the Country** (5850)

3.30 **Ants in Your Pants** (8198343) 3.50 **ChuckleVision** (8185779) 4.10 **Get Your Own Back** (7626110) 4.35 **Cartoon Critters** (4828564) 5.00 **Newsworld** (Ceefax) (7901362) 5.10 **Blue Peter** (Ceefax) (s) (2614121) 5.35 **Neighbours** (f) (Ceefax) (s) (1192275)

6.00 **News and weather** (Ceefax) (817)

6.30 **Regional news** (169)

7.00 **Small Talk Quiz Show** hosted by Ronnie Corbett (Ceefax) (s) (7459)

7.30 **Tomorrow's World**. Howard Stabeloff reports from Australia on how mothers-to-be can now get an extraordinaryemento of their unborn baby: a 3D plastic model of the fetus while it is still in the womb. Plus news from America on a revolutionary new, dimpled, baseball bat. Shahnaz Pakravan tests it (Ceefax) (s) (4633)

8.00 **Choice: Big Cat Diary**. Topical wildlife reports from Kenya's Maasai Mara. Simon King and Jonathan Scott follow the action as a camera crew trails a cheetah and her cubs, a pride of lions and the elusive leopard (Ceefax) (s) (3879)

8.30 **Next of Kin**. Comedy series with Penelope Keith and William Gauri (f) (Ceefax) (s) (5614)

9.00 **Nine O'Clock News**, regional news and weather (8053)

9.30 **The Thin Blue Line: Night Shift**. Ben Elton's comedy series set in Gaslight police station. The station is full of juvenile yobs, but then that's CID for you (f) (Ceefax) (s) (42530)

10.00 **QED: Life on Ice** (Ceefax) (s) (992508)

10.35 **International Come Dancing**, (1/2) (s) (710091)

11.25 **Film: The Sunshine Boys** (1975). Comedy based on the successful Broadway play by Neil Simon. Two former vaudeville comedians agree to buy the hatched and come out of retirement to do a television special. With Walter Matthau, George Burns, Richard Benjamin and Lee Meriwether Directed by Herbert Ross (344343)

1.15pm-1.20 **Weather** (2520638)

BBC2

6.00am **Open University: Maths** (2326169) 6.25 **Science and Nuclear Waste** (2238204) 6.50 **Rural Life: Image and Reality** (3834564)

7.30 **Alvin and the Chipmunks** (1602918) 7.55 **Get Your Own Back** (f) (Ceefax) (s) (2211324) 8.20 **Mr Benn** (6105091) 8.35 **Laurel** (s) (2620298) 9.00 **BBC2 on Cartooning** (f) (767430)

9.30 **Brainwaves** (s) (6348121) 9.35 **Today's Gourmet** (s) (382166) 10.00 **Playdays** (s) (3832166) 10.25 **The History Man** (f) (Ceefax) (s) (7072411) 10.30 **On the Road Again** (Ceefax) (72614)

11.00 **TUC Conference**. Today's debates include the minimum wage, full employment and economic policy (s) (36314)

1.00pm **The World of Wines: Port and Madeira** (s) (7121) 1.30 **Working Lunch** (98978) 2.00 **Melvin and Maudre's Music-a-Graine** (f) (50177695)

2.15 **TUC Conference**. Further coverage from Blackpool. Includes **News: Regional News and weather** at 3.00pm (193169)

3.55 **News and Weather** (Ceefax) (4828988)

4.00 **Today's The Day** (s) (782) 4.30 **The Ready, Steady, Cook** (s) (666) 5.00 **The Oprah Winfrey Show** (Ceefax) (s) (5674988) 5.40 **Flying Vets** (691072)

6.00 **Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Last Outpost** (f) (Ceefax) (s) (504324)

6.45 **Kicking and Screaming: The Route to 66**. In 1953, the England team suffered their first ever home defeat when Hungary beat them 6-3. Sir Alf Ramsey and other former England players and managers recall how England went from international humiliation to World Cup winners in 13 years (s) (6224233)

7.30 **Scene: Trafford Tandz**. A play about women's rights (f) (Ceefax) (s) (885)

8.00 **Farnborough 98: The Aviation Business**. The second of two programmes looks at a week flying from the crowds gathered by the British Aviation Industry. After Airbus and Eurofighter should Britain commit itself to further European collaboration or go forward with America? (s) (4121)

8.30 **The Fred Dibnah Story**. The Bolton stonemason's巧 opt to holiday with a steam engine (Ceefax) (2266) N.L.: **War Walks**

9.00 **Changing Rooms**. Two neighbours transform a room in each other's homes – with a budget of £500 and a little professional help (Ceefax) (s) (6695)

9.30 **Great Railway Journeys: Aleppo to**

Aqaba. The comedian Alexei Sayle journeys through the Middle East (Ceefax) (s) (48430)

10.30 **Newsworld** (Ceefax) (23204)

11.15 **The Larry Sanders Show** (Ceefax) (714985) 11.30 **Seinfeld** (Ceefax) (s) (770343)

12.00-12.30pm **Greece Under Fire** (s) (89676)

Comedian Alexei Sayle (9.30pm)

9.30 **Great Railway Journeys: Aleppo to Aqaba**. The comedian Alexei Sayle journeys through the Middle East (Ceefax) (s) (48430)

10.30 **Newsworld** (Ceefax) (23204)

11.15 **The Larry Sanders Show** (Ceefax) (714985) 11.30 **Seinfeld** (Ceefax) (s) (770343)

12.00-12.30pm **Greece Under Fire** (s) (89676)

CHOICE

BBC1

6.00am **Big Cat Diary** (BBC1, 9.30pm)

7.30 **Alvin and the Chipmunks** (1602918) 7.55 **Get Your Own Back** (f) (Ceefax) (s) (2211324) 8.20 **Second Noah** (82965) 9.30-10.00 **Home Improvement** (82965)

10.30 **Three's Company** (s) (6545-6) 10.00 **Hard to Kill** (1990) 10.25 **60 Minutes** (226565) 1.40pm **Compassion** (s) (672541) 2.25 **Little Shop of Horrors** (1963) (86841)

3.00 **QED: Life on Ice** (Ceefax) (s) (992508)

3.30 **International Come Dancing**, (1/2) (s) (710091)

11.25 **Film: The Sunshine Boys** (1975). Comedy based on the successful Broadway play by Neil Simon. Two former vaudeville comedians agree to buy the hatched and come out of retirement to do a television special. With Walter Matthau, George Burns, Richard Benjamin and Lee Meriwether Directed by Herbert Ross (344343)

1.15pm-1.20 **Weather** (2520638)

HTV

6.00am **GMTV** (9111091)

9.25 **Supermarket Sweep** (s) (2708904) 9.55 **Regional News** (3893985) 10.00 **The Time... the Place** (s) (2764533) 10.35 **This Morning** (64596169)

12.20pm **Regional News** (7276324) 12.30 **ITV News** (Teletext) (2380459)

12.55 **Shortland Street** (2358166) 2.00 **Coronation Street** (3605166) 2.25 **Home and Away** (97971546) 2.55 **Quisine** (9795053) 2.58 **Vanessa** (7082430)

3.20 **ITN News** (Teletext) (7705701)

3.30 **ITV TV Classics** (f) (s) (6262633) 3.40 **The Parkers** (4406169) 3.50 **Chatterbox** (Pondoland) (2234121) 4.05 **The Twisted Tales of Felix the Cat** (s) (2065508) 4.15 **Wolf in the Next Generation** (Teletext) (s) (7698879)

4.40 **NEWS** **REBRAZ**. Children's drama series. Henry, Zillah and Joe Fisher return from school to find no car, no food, no money and no father (Teletext) (6881362)

5.10 **Wheel of Fortune** with Nicky Campbell (8021576)

5.40 **ITV News and weather** (Teletext) (689588)

6.00 **Home and Away**. Joey is having second thoughts about life outside the commune (f) (s) (965)

6.25 **Regional News** (Teletext) (3399868)

6.40 **REBRAZ**. Children's drama series. Henry, Zillah and Joe Fisher return from school to find no car, no food, no money and no father (Teletext) (6881362)

6.50 **ITV West except:**

12.25pm **Home and Away** (3285850)

1.25 **Quisine** (6821503)

1.55 **A Country Practice** (32617701)

2.20 **Vanessa** (9797582)

2.55 **Home and Away** (2382103)

3.00 **Coronation Street** (3204533)

3.30 **Home and Away** (8021576)

3.45 **Coronation Street** (3204533)

4.00 **ITV News** (Teletext) (7

**TENNIS 43**

Stand-in has no answer to Rusedski's power

SPORT

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1996

Former Arsenal manager handed task of halting decline at Elland Road

Leeds bring Graham out of exile

BY PETER BALL

GEORGE GRAHAM'S exile from football has ended after 17 months. Leeds United appointed him manager yesterday in succession to Howard Wilkinson, who was dismissed on Monday.

Graham will start with a 2½-year contract. His only comment on its value yesterday was that it is "a big one", and informed speculation suggests it is unlikely to be worth less than £300,000 a year.

"I met George for the first time at 7am this morning, that's how quick it was," Bill Fotherby, the Leeds managing director said, adding: "There was no question of getting one manager out to get another in."

The appointment came as no surprise, however. Graham is known to be close to Richard Thompson, a neighbour in Hampstead and the owner of the Caspian Group, the club's new owners. His name had been linked with Leeds since the end of his one-year ban from the game for accepting a £285,000 "bung" from Rune Hauge, the Norwegian agent, for transfer dealings.

"What happened to George was discussed by myself and my fellow directors," Fotherby said. "and we decided to approach Howard Kendall to



1991, and an FA and Coca-Cola Cup double in 1993, leading on to the Cup Winners' Cup a year later.

For his part, Leeds represents the big stage he wants, unlike Manchester City, whom he turned down last week. While City's search continues unsuccessfully, Sheffield United yesterday refused them permission to approach Howard Kendall.

1994: Born Bargoed, Scotland, November 30
1992: Signs for Aston Villa
1993: Wins Division One title for £6,000
1995: Joins Arsenal for £50,000
1996: Helps Arsenal to win Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, beating Anderlecht in final
1997: Wins Division One title for £100,000
1998: Wins FA Cup double, leading Arsenal to FA Cup double-winning side
1999: Joins Manchester United after winning first of 12 Scotland caps
1999: Wins Division One title for £100,000
1999: Moves to Crystal Palace
1999: Retires from playing and works part-time as a barmen before leaving coaching job at Crystal Palace
1999: Joins Rangers Manager to Crystal Palace as coach
1999: Guides McNeil to promotion from old club
1999: Becomes Arsenal manager in May

FACTFILE

1999: Becomes Arsenal manager in May

should not be an issue. The problems of the past had no effect on our decision. Quite simply, he is the best man for the job."

Graham said that he never doubted he would get another job, adding: "It's nice to be back." On his record, Leeds could hardly have made a better choice. He won six trophies in eight years with Arsenal, including two League championships, in 1999 and

1991, and an FA and Coca-Cola Cup double in 1993, leading on to the Cup Winners' Cup a year later.

Whether the fans will enjoy the methods remains to be seen. Arsenal supporters had few complaints until things began to go wrong at the end, but Graham, like Wilkinson, is a man for method rather than self-expression, although his Arsenal team's clenching approach will not be foreign to the Leeds tradition.

"At Highbury, we had fantastic team spirit, great passion and attitude," he said. "The side didn't lie down and get beaten easily, and that's what we've got to get here. When Leeds were successful, sides didn't like coming here, and that's what we want again."

He has also shown himself to be, in his own words, "a canny operator" in the transfer market. As Wilkinson failed to spend the money injected by Caspian before he was dismissed, Graham will have around £10 million at his disposal. It is a significant sum if he goes abroad; less so if he buys at home, a market in which he has proved adept, at least until the dog days of his eight years at Highbury.

At Arsenal, he also proved successful in bringing on a group of excellent young players. There is another group at Leeds, although Graham yesterday was, as always, being cautious. "I haven't seen Leeds this season, so I don't know the players," he said. "But my strength is working with and assessing players, and I shall do that."

"At Highbury, I was fortunate to join a club which had



Graham relaunches his managerial career after a 17-month absence with a kick-start at Elland Road yesterday

a very talented group of young players, and then we got things right with some shrewd buying in the lower divisions. That's more difficult now."

For the moment, he has not decided on an assistant. David O'Leary, his regular golfing partner during his year out, and Stewart Houston, his

assistant at Arsenal, are among the favourites. Whether he will also return to Highbury for any of his old players is likely to provoke much speculation in the coming days, although Tony Adams, the commanding defender Leeds need, is unlikely to be available.

Wilkinson was not the only person to leave Leeds this week. Peter Gilman, one of the three major shareholders, along with Fotherby and the former chairman, Leslie Silver, was voted off the board yesterday. Gilman had opposed the sale to Caspian in the summer.

Harassed Harford putting faith in resurgent Sutton

BY PETER BALL

ON MONDAY night, Chris Sutton offered Blackburn Rovers the first halting signs that there might be life after Alan Shearer. After the 2-1 defeat by Derby County, Ray Harford volunteered the first criticism of the timing of the move that took the England striker from Ewood Park to Newcastle United.

With only one point from their first five games, Harford's position as Blackburn manager was inevitably being questioned, on the day that Howard Wilkinson was dismissed by Leeds United. Harford, though, is confident that the Blackburn board is more aware of the difficulties than Leeds's proved to be.

The departure of Shearer left Harford's plans in disarray. "I don't understand how clubs can sit through the summer, let the manager fulfil his game-plan, and then do it after five games," he reflected. "But you don't know what is happening to their game-plan."

"Our game-plan was jeopardised by Alan Shearer going when he did, so close to the start of the season. At the end of the season, we had a game-plan of what we were trying to do. But we were waiting and waiting. Waiting for the end of the European championships, waiting for Alan to come back for pre-

season, waiting for him to have his holiday. And then you've got £15 million to spend, so you ask for a player, who might be two grand, and they ask for £5 million."

To compound Harford's problems, Sutton was injured in pre-season. On Monday, if still short of match fitness, he was pushed into service. "I spoke to him last week and said 'We really need you,'" Harford said. "He trained Thursday and Friday and really looked terrific, and so I told him, 'Get yourself ready to be available on Monday', and he was a big plus for us."

Sutton responded by scoring Blackburn's first goal of the season at home and his

first Premiership goal anywhere since April last year. It was not enough to bring Blackburn victory, but his all-round performance suggested that, after a fallow year, he might be ready to fulfil the promise he showed at Norwich City, and in his early days at Blackburn.

"If Chris Sutton can play like that, and I know he can, then he can replace Alan Shearer for us," Harford said. "We were able to play balls in for him, and he made them stick most of the time and if he didn't, he still made it awkward for the defender. He's a real leader of the line, and that's what we've been crying for."

Yet, although the return of Sutton is a boost for Harford, Blackburn need points quickly. On Saturday they go to Newcastle, giving Sutton an early chance to match himself against Shearer. That should provide the adrenaline rush to carry him through a second game so soon after his return. Harford will hope it does.

"You've got to have a game-plan in everything," he said, "and if that means taking a few punches on the chin, then you have to do it. Of course, it might be me taking the punches. If that's the case, so be it. But the decisions are made by the people in charge."

Chairman maintains family life

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

TOMMY MCLEAN walked out on Raith Rovers yesterday just a week after being appointed and was immediately named as the new manager of Dundee United.

A hectic day of managerial manoeuvres began when Billy Kirkwood was dismissed by United. That news was followed rapidly by the announcement from Jim McLean, the United chairman, that his brother would be filling the vacancy. Raith and United are the bottom two clubs in the Bell's Scottish League premier division.

Tommy McLean, who was in charge of Raith for only one match, said: "I've had an agonising 24 hours dealing with this situation and, after much soul-searching, I reached the conclusion that, for footballing and family reasons, I could not pass up the opportunity to manage Dundee United."

Jim McLean said: "As director of the club, we have to make decisions in the best interests of our own club, and the experience and ability of Tommy makes him the ideal man to take the helm here."

Iain Munro was another manager to accept a new job yesterday, leaving Hamilton Academical to join St Mirren. Sandy Clark, his assistant, succeeds him at Hamilton.

CRICKET 46

England bring Tufnell back into the fold



Lee finds offer to buy City shares tempting

BY DAVID MADDOCK

FRANCIS LEE, the Manchester City chairman, is considering an offer from an as yet unnamed consortium to buy a controlling interest in the Nationwide League first division club.

The bidder has appointed a broker to secure a 60 per cent stake, and it is understood Lee is giving serious thought to the proposal. The offer would be worth more than £10 million, giving Lee a profit on his original investment of £1 million.

Lee has made it clear that he has not had any official approach from an Arab consortium. Reports suggested that Prince Walid Iben Talal of Saudi Arabia had launched a bid for the club, but Lee denied all knowledge of any such approach yesterday.

Two likelier candidates are David Whelan, the former Blackburn Rovers player, who is now the owner of a sports-wear chain, JJB Sports. Whelan is already involved in football with Wigan Athletic, and it is now believed that he would like to become more seriously involved, at Maine Road. Another possible candidate is the Conrad group that was unsuccessful in a bid for Leeds United. The consortium contains two Manchester businessmen.

If Lee decides to sell, then Stephen Boles, still the major shareholder at Manchester City with a 29 per cent stake, would follow suit. Speaking last week, he said he has received offers for his shares, but would only sell if Lee agrees.

It is unlikely that the interested parties will launch a hostile takeover bid, because Lee has share options which would give him a majority control at the club.

If the bid is successful, it could be completed next week, but Lee may remain as chairman to give the supporters a popular figurehead.

□ The Bundesliga side, 1860 Munich, signed Abedi Pelé, the Ghana striker, on a free transfer from Torino yesterday. Pelé, 33, a member of the Olympique Marseille team that won the European Cup in 1993, will replace Olai Boddin, who has a viral infection.

Rob Hughes, page 44
Rangers' task, page 44

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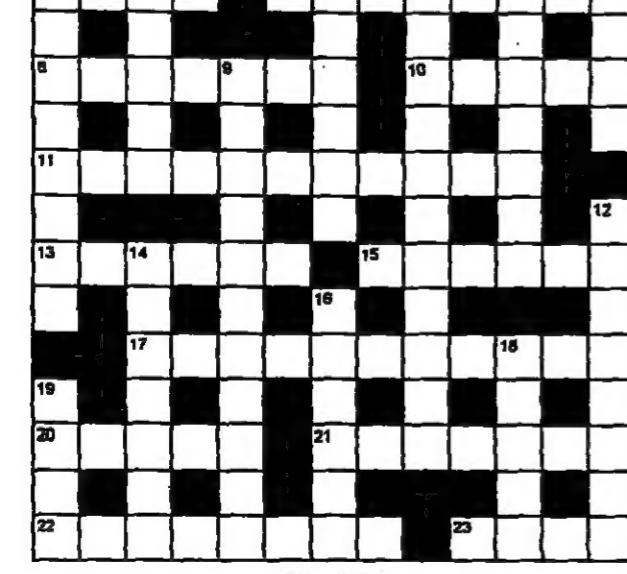
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No 884

ACROSS
1 Church recess (4)
3 Printer's star (8)
5 Into which things disappear mysteriously (4,3)
10 Store: regimental HQ (5)
11 Trivial; to be disdained (3,3,5)
13 Cowardly (6)
15 Conceal; protect (6)
17 Roadmenders' vehicle; crush (dissent) (11)
20 Macbeth's Cawdor title (5)
21 Making verses; sort of slang (7)
22 Itinerant singer once (8)
23 In this place (4)
SOLUTION TO NO 883
ACROSS: 1 Plangent 3 Spur 9 To put it mildly 10 Hero 11 Flannel 13 Rafty 15 Campus 18 Gorilla 20 Ramp 23 Noisance 24 Lord 25 Zealot
DOWN: 1 Pith 2 Ample 3 Gets off 4 Notify 6 Podsnap 7 Royalist 8 List 12 Original 14 Terrier 16 Arrival 17 Gauche 19 Leap 21 Muler 22 Deny
SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 879
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ACROSS: 1 Base 3 Shadowed 8 Guru 9 Slovenia 11 Up to a point 14 Gantry 15 Choice 17 Bitter pill 20 Unlikely 21 Dire 22 Remember 23 Chat
DOWN: 1 Begradie 2 Scrutiny 4 Hollow 5 Devonshire 6 Wine 7 Draw 10 Fair dinkum 12 Diminish 13 Hell-bent 16 Alike 18 Burr 19 Glim
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